



Aldsworth Manor, Aldsworth, Gloucestershire

Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment

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OA South

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0ES

t. +44 (0)1865 263 800

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridge
CB23 8SG

t. +44 (0)1223 850 500

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane Mills
Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 1QD

t. +44 (0)1524 880 250

e. info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w. oxfordarchaeology.com

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Written by Deirdre Forde

Illustrations by Magalena Wachnik

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Summary

In March 2021, Oxford Archaeology was commissioned to carry out a programme of archaeological investigation and recording as well as statement of significance and impact assessment at Aldsworth Manor in Aldsworth, Gloucestershire in advance of some alterations.

Aldsworth Manor is a Grade II listed building that dates to the 17th century, but it may be built around elements of older structures. It is a two-storey, limestone house with cellar and attic levels built over four bays. It has gables to the north and south and a roof of stone tiles. It has been altered in the 20th century with the addition of the porch to the façade and an extension to the rear, and the interior is largely influenced by 20th-century refurbishment. It does, however, retain much of its 17th-century character and its fine rib-vaulted cellar, stone mullioned windows and large historic chimney stacks are intact. Elevated to its rear are historic outbuildings that have been converted to garages and a cottage in the 20th century. Its many phases and the influence of those who inhabited it over several centuries are evident, giving the house a charming multi-phase character that makes it highly significant to its setting.

The proposed alteration would have a very minor impact on the significant historic fabric of the house. They would necessitate the removal of some fabric from the north gable where a doorway would be inserted and some removal of common rafters from the roof where dormer windows are to be rearranged. These works would not have any considerable impact on the historic character of the house. The proposed works where 20th-century interventions are to be removed will have a positive impact as much of this fabric does nothing to enhance the historic character of the house. Indeed, much of it detracts from and obscures the 17th-century character and its removal will expose significant fabric. The addition of the extensions to the north and south elevations will have a visual impact on the property and its setting. However, it is considered that both the symmetry of these proposed extensions, as well as their positioning behind the façade of the historic house, mitigate this visual impact. The materials and design of the extensions have been thoughtfully considered so as to be sympathetic to the 17th-century house but not pastiche, and will sit comfortably in the setting of the surrounding village. They reflect a tasteful and proportionate 21st-century evolution of the property, embodying modern architectural ideals in terms of sustainability and energy efficiency.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 In March 2021, Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by F&GS Architects, on behalf of Jonathan and Harriet Turnbull, to carry out a programme of archaeological investigation and recording as well as an impact assessment at Aldsworth Manor in advance of some alterations.

1.1.2 Aldsworth Manor is a Grade II listed building in the village of Aldsworth in Gloucestershire that dates to the 17th century, but it may be built around elements of older structures. Elevated to its rear and included in this investigation are historic outbuildings that have been converted to garages and a cottage in the 20th century.

1.1.3 This report is an interim report detailing the initial investigation and recording, as well as some historic research. The final report will include a statement of significance, an impact assessment, and the record will be enhanced by any further intrusive works at the property.

1.1.4 The proposed alterations to Aldsworth Manor entail;

- The addition of a single-storey kitchen/family room to the north elevation, a boot room to the west elevation and a small, single-storey orangery to the south elevation, which would join the current back hall on the west rear;
- The widening of the entrance doorway in the ground floor of the 20th-century porch tower and the removal of the 20th-century paved terrace surrounding the house;
- The replacement of the current dormer windows on the east front with four evenly spaced dormer windows;
- The removal of the 20th-century concrete and steel supports in the cellar and the insertion of new access from the ground of the stair turret through the west wall of the north chamber;
- The removal of the kitchen in the west side of the dining room, the blocking of the doorway in the north wall of the reception room, and the partitions in the back hall, all dating to the 20th-century;
- The removal of the modern panelling in the reception room and the modern material around the chimney stack that separates the drawing room and the reception room, as well as the reinstatement of the inglenook;
- The removal of the modern, solid flooring and their various surfaces from the ground floor, to be replaced with modern underfloor heating and more appropriate floor surfaces;
- The rearrangement of non-structural modern partitions on the first floor and replacement of modern joinery;

- The removal of partitions in the attic, including part of the south wall of bedroom 8 to incorporate the storage space of the adjacent bathroom, and the removal of the cupboards in bedroom 7;
- The replacement of all doors and windows to the cottage at the rear including the modern infill of earlier opening to the east facing front;
- Replacement of the existing doorway between the north and south bay on the interior of the cottage and the rearrangement of modern partitions in the lean-to and the attic level.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

Historic Buildings assessment

1.2.1 The principal aim of the final report is;

- to investigate and record for posterity the manor house in its current form prior to any proposed works;
- to enhance understanding of the manor house and its construction history;
- to inform any proposed alterations to the house;
- to make the record publicly accessible through a final report (a public document) and a project archive deposited with a public institution.

1.3 Methodology

Historic Building Assessment and Recording

1.3.1 The recording programme is being undertaken to Level 3 as defined by Historic England in *Understanding Historic Buildings: a Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016).

1.3.2 The Historic England guidance document states that '*Level 3 is an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support an historical analysis*'.

1.3.3 The building recording consists of three main elements: a drawn record, a descriptive, written record and a photographic record. Particular attention is paid to the architecture, use, construction and evolution of the building.

1.3.4 For the drawn survey, the client made available the existing plans and elevations, and these are annotated and enhanced. Further drawings are created of features of archaeological significance by measured hand survey where necessary. The photographic survey consists of general photographs and specific details and with a digital camera. The descriptive survey complements the photographic records and adds further analytical and descriptive detail.

2 BACKGROUND HISTORY

2.1 Aldsworth

- 2.1.1 Aldsworth is a small village and civil parish in the Cotswold district of Gloucestershire. It is located about ten miles north-east of Cirencester, slightly north of the River Leach. Its nearest neighbouring villages are Sherbourne, Coln St Aldwyns and Bibury, and the town of Burford is six miles away.
- 2.1.2 The stony soil is not very fertile but is suitable for sheep farming and throughout the village's history, this has been the main economic activity, although corn, barley and turnips were also grown. It was recorded in the Domesday Book as Elleorde, an old English name meaning Old Enclosure or Old Farm. Settlement at Aldsworth developed around a series of small springs running north to south and its early history involved the church in Bibury being granted land in Aldsworth to support a chapel. By 1086, St Peter's of Gloucester held the largest estate in Aldsworth and by 1151, Oseney Abbey of Oxford and Cirencester Abbey also held large estates there. The efficient organisation of wool production by these estates, and the profit generated, contributed to the building of the churches in the area.
- 2.1.3 The Church's influence decreased after the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 when a new class of landowner was created. The village suffered during the Civil War of 1641 – 45 as it was on the main route between the Royalist headquarters in Oxford and the Parliamentary stronghold in Cirencester, and as a result the population fell. The fortunes of the village changed, however, when from 1743 to 1845, there was a racecourse 1 mile away on the downs that stretched to Burford. During these years, a stabling business and racehorse training, as well as village inn, flourished. The race meetings were very fashionable and were attended by the Prince of Wales around the turn of the century, and later by King George IV. Today, the village has a population of just over three thousand but in the 19th century, the population was twice as big as it is now due to the prosperity of the sheep farming, the racecourse, and the renewed influence of the Church.
- 2.1.4 The village suffered through the agricultural depression in the late 19th century due to the dramatic fall of grain prices, and throughout the early 20th century. However, production of food and open spaces for airfields during World War II again increased prosperity in the village, despite the hardships. The late 20th century and early 21st century has seen a greater turnover of population in the village, and houses bought and sold at a faster rate. The end of the millennium saw the building of a village hall at Aldsworth.
- 2.1.5 According to Jessica Stawell in her book *Aldsworth 1000-2000; The History of a Cotswold Village* (2002), several families have had a great influence in the village. The Duttons of Sherborne acquired the main estate in the village after the dissolution and the head of that family became a baronet in 1678 and a baron in 1784. From the 1790, he controlled almost all of Aldsworth and his control was strengthened by the Enclosure Act of 1793. This estate was still largely intact when it was sold to the National Trust in 1982 at a time when most of the property in

Aldsworth was sold. The Waine family came to Aldsworth in about 1700 and for the next 200 years were maltsters, bakers, brewers and stable keepers as well as farmers. The Garne family came to Aldsworth in around 1800 as tenant farmers and they became renowned for breeding sheep and cattle. The Phillips family moved to the village in the late 19th century and had a great influence on it in the 20th century when John Phillips took on many farms in and around Aldsworth. His son Gregory farmed in Aldsworth for more than fifty years from 1946.

2.2 Aldsworth Manor

2.2.1 The following text has been taken from *Aldsworth 1000-2000; The History of a Cotswold Village* by Jessica Stawell (2002);

The estate in Aldsworth held by the church in Bibury in 1086 consisted of 3 hides of land (approximately 360 acres). The priest and his men had four ploughs. There must therefore have been a house, cottages and farm buildings on the estate at that date. They had probably been there for centuries. In 1151 Bibury Church was 'appropriated' by Oseney Abbey, Oxford. In 1546, not long after the dissolution of the monasteries, the 'impropriate rectory' in Aldsworth, together with the advowson of the church, was handed over to Christ Church, Oxford, a new foundation that was a cathedral and a college combined.

Already before that, in 1544, the Dean (Richard Coxe) and Chapter of the Cathedral granted a lease of the Rectory Manor in Aldsworth to John Blomer of Heythrop for seventy years at a rent of £13 13s 4d. The tenant was to rebuild the ruinous house, provide a bushel of wheat at Easter to make oblations and straw for strewing in the church, and to receive 'honestly' any preacher sent by the Dean and Chapter to preach the word of God in the church. In 1560 a lease of the parsonage, cottage and tithes was granted to Edward Barnard, gentleman, of London for forty years.

In 1612 Henry Powle of Coln St Aldwyns was granted a lease of the manor and parsonage in Aldsworth for the term of three lives.

An early eighteenth-century legal document refers to a 'new-built dwelling house all erected at the only cost and charge of Henry Bote, of stone, timber and other materials, the old being quite ruined and not habitable, the old tenant not able to repair it. The said new house consisteth of four rooms below stairs and four above with a garret over'. It is difficult to see who this Henry Bote could be, since the name is not recorded anywhere else and the Powle family were tenants from 1612 until 1737. Perhaps 'Henry Bote' was a sub-tenant, or the name possibly could be a mistranscription of Henry Powle. In a list of inscriptions in the church and the churchyard made in 1785, there are eleven for people with the surname Palmer born between 1685 and 1712. It is likely that this family lived at the manor. The 1999 edition of *The Buildings of England* describes the Manor in Aldsworth as 'mid-seventeenth century' and thus it is likely to be the house described in the eighteenth-century document – which has no date.

It was probably when Henry Powle (1630-92) was lessee that the Manor House in Aldsworth was built. He was the son of the aforementioned Henry who had bought Williamstrip Manor in Coln St Aldwyns in 1618 and who died in 1642. This younger

Henry Powle was MP for Cirencester. He became speaker of the House of Commons and Master of the Rolls in the reign of William III, and is said to have been that monarch's most trusted advisor. He bought Williamstrip from his elder brother in 1657. After his death in 1692 his daughter Catherine (d. 1714) and her husband Henry Ireton (d. 1711) held a lease of Aldsworth Rectory Manor. They also inherited Williamstrip Manor.

The link between Aldsworth and Williamstrip continued. John Powle and William Forrester who held later leases [see the list of leases below] were Catherine Ireton's cousins and heirs. Samuel Blackwell, MP for Cirencester, bought Williamstrip in about 1760.

It is possible that none of these head lessees actually lived in Aldsworth. Then, as now, land was bought or leased as an investment and sub-let.

The leases granted by Christ Church were usually for a term of seven years. From 1772 the lessee was John Waine (1738-76), and later his wife Mary. A document of 1723 indicates that a John Waine was a sub-tenant of the Manor in 1712. From 1791 until 1864 Lord Sherborne was the lessee.

Aldsworth Manor was described in 1771 as a three-storey house of five bays with some twelve rooms.

Lord Sherborne (the 1st Baron) was able to treat the rectory estate very much as his own. He actually lost the lease, so that his son later has to apply to Christ Church for another. He built a stretch of road in front of the house to complete his green carriageway from Sherborne House to the turnpike road, so that he could drive directly to the racecourse at Ladbarrow with his important guest beside him. A lodge built of ashlar stone with a triangular pediment was built on the main Cirencester to Burford Road. A similar lodge was built 2 miles to the north on the main Northleach to Burford Road. They were called Allen's Lodges. (Another lodge half way along the route later became a gamekeeper's cottage. It was occupied by Mr Sandles before it was demolished just after the Second World War.)

The sub-tenants of the Rectory Manor at the time of the enclosure were William Palphrey and William Hewer. William Palphrey held Pig Close, the western part of the rectory estate and Cocklebarrow – 646 acres, the south-east part of Rectory Farm, including the part on the other side of the main road. In 1821 Adam Craddock farmed 435 acres of the Rectory Farm, including the part on the other side of the main road and Thomas Sadler 148 acres. In the 1840s and 1850s Richard Waine (1783 – 1858) farmed 413 acres of Rectory Farm. It is not known where all these tenants lived.

As for the Rectory House itself, the three words most often used to describe it in the Christ Church records are 'large, ancient and ruinous'. In 1835 it was once more in bad repair. The upper floor was said to be unusable: 'one could not tread on it without danger'. In 1837 it was restored completely by Lord Sherborne. From 1849 to 1888 it was usually occupied by the vicar. An attempt was made in 1872 to establish it as a permanent vicarage, but the Ecclesiastical Commission did not consider it suitable.

From about 1890 to 1919, when he retired, the Manor Farm was let to Thomas Reginald Slatter (1868 – 1830). He married a farmer's daughter Edith Hewer (1872 – 1949), in 1901 and they had four children, Sara, Lois, Owen and David, born in 1902, 1903, 1906 and 1913.

In 1919 the 621 acres of Manor Farm (sometimes called College Farm) and the Manor House were let to Mr John Burton A'bear (1858 – 1937), who came with his wife Ada and family from Courtfield Farm, Peppard, Henley-on-Thames. They travelled by train to Fairford and then by horse and wagon. There had been twelve children in the family, two by a first marriage and ten by a second, but the elder son of the first marriage, Jack Bert, had been killed in the 1914 – 18 war. Thomas Newall, the second eldest, also fought in the war, in the cavalry, but survived, and at the time of the Armistice was in hospital with flu, which he survived also. The eleven A'bear children who came to Aldsworth were Thomas Newall, Winifrid Mary, Edmund Ironsides (known as 'Sides'), Bertha Mary, Albert (who went to Canada and got killed in an accident), George Edgar, Helen (known as Nell), Frederick John, Charles Reginald, Sydney Arthur (known as Ted) and Kathleen Mary.

The family brought their livestock with them – 200 Hampshire Down sheep, six carthorses, a horse and trap, and a horse and van (the horses travelled by road). Some of the family came by car. Sydney Arthur, known as Ted, was 10 years old when the family came to Aldsworth.

The staff on the farm at the time included the Barnes family – father and son; Jimmy Midwinter, who lived at Chapel Row; John Stevens, who used to clean up around the house and looked after the trap-horse and the trap, and who lived in one of the Manor Farm Cottages; and the shepherd, who lived in the other.

When the eldest sons, Thomas Newall and 'Sides' married, their father put them into farms at Withington and Ablington; but John Burton A'bear died in 1937, leaving four boys and two girls still at home. In 1939 Mrs S. j. Phillips asked Charles to manage the farm at Ablington, and then asked Ted to help manage the farms at Kemble. Fred found a job at Daglingworth.

George A'bear (1905 – 75) was the eldest son left at home when his father died, so he took on the tenancy of Manor Farm in 1937 with his wife Eveline (1903 – 74). George A'bear farmed Manor Farm for thirty years but had no son to take over the tenancy. In 1970 Christ Church sold the estate with its 620 acres to the Hon. E. R. H. Wills and since then this land has been leased to and farmed by S. J. Phillips and Sons Ltd.

The former Rectory Farmhouse, or Manor, hereafter always called 'The Manor', was sold together with the Manor Lodge and the barns to Captain Peter Percy, TD, in 1975. He and his wife Jean had formerly lived in Bibury. Peter Percy ran a poultry wholesale business from the big barn behind the house. Refrigerated lorries laden with chickens and Turkeys would come and go at all times of the day and night.

The house was stripped of the ivy that covered it and extensively restored. The porch was altered with a flight of steps up to it and the house was floodlit so that its appearance was completely changed. Inside the house was redecorated with

considerable style and flair. The Percy's were outgoing and hospitable. They had two beautiful daughters, Vanessa and Joanne, who were fashion models. Joanna was 'deb. of the year' in the early 1980s. Peter took his responsibility for the church and chancel seriously and supported the church in many ways. He also founded the Aldsworth branch of the British Legion. Unfortunately, the poultry business failed and the Percy's had to leave in 1986.

The Manor House was sold to Mr and Mrs Hulbert. The big barn was sold separately. The pair of semi-detached farm cottages on the Cirencester Road were built just before 1919.

Leases of Aldsworth Manor granted by Christ Church

1544 – John Blomer of Heythrop

1560 – Edward Bernard of London

1612 – Henry Powle of Coln St Aldwyns

1636 – Henry Powle

1680 – Henry Powle

1695 – Henry Ireton and his wife Catherine, the only daughter and heir of Henry Powle

1717 – John Powle

1723 – John Powle

1724 – John Powle

1730 – John Powle

1737 – John Powle

1744 – William Forrester

1751 – John Needham and Robert Henley

1766 – Samuel Blackwell

1772 – John Waine

1779 – Mary Waine, widow of John

1786 – Mary Waine

1809 – James Dutton, 1st Baron Sherborne

1823 – John Dutton, 2nd Baron Sherborne

1834 – John Dutton

1836 – John Dutton

1943 – John Dutton

1850 – John Dutton

1857 – John Dutton

1864 – Charles John Howard, 27th Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire

1970 – Sold to the Hon. E. R. H. Wills – 620 acres for £180,000

2.3 Map Regression

- 2.3.1 The Aldsworth Enclosure Map dating to 1799 shows a building on the site of Aldsworth Manor that is difficult to make out but appears to be L-shaped in plan. This may be an error in the map but may also represent structures built onto the current house that no longer exist. To the rear of the building on the west side is a structure that may be what is now the north garage on the terrace over the house.
- 2.3.2 On the 1882 six-inch OS map, Aldsworth Manor is called 'Vicarage'. It shows the footprint of the house much as it exists today. There is a structure in the current location of the porch tower and there appear to be structures at either side of the stair turret to the rear of the building. The turret like structure that curves outwards to the south of the stair turret may be represented here and it is likely that there may have been earlier outbuildings that predate the current 20th century extensions. The road that was laid by Lord Sherbourne in front of the house in the 19th century is visible on the map, but the stone paved terrace is not. The enclosed area shown behind the house is where it is built into the incline of the hill. Both the buildings that today are the cottage and the north garage are present on this map, but the west garage is not. On the north side of the north garage, at the west end, the building protrudes northwards. According to the previous owners, this was a pig sty. All of the north side of this garage was extended as far as this structure and the north gable of the cottage by the previous owners in the 1980s.
- 2.3.3 On the 1903 six-inch OS map, Aldsworth Manor is referred to as 'Manor Farm'. The footprint of the outhouses has not changed but the manor house is represented as a simple rectangle. By the time the 1920 OS map is drawn, this has not changed.

3 DESCRIPTION OF ALDSWORTH MANOR

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Aldsworth Manor is situated in the Gloucestershire village of Aldsworth. It is located on the west side of the historic core of the village, just to the east of St Bartholomew's Church. The house is built into an east to west incline towards the north side of a large rectangular plot, orientated south-east to north-west. On the east side is a lawn and a kitchen garden. The garden carries around the north and south sides of the house and there are outbuildings to the west. To the immediate rear of the house is a small two-storey cottage, the façade of which faces the manor house. To the rear of this are two long garage buildings, situated perpendicular to each other. These buildings sit on a large, stone-paved terrace that is elevated above the manor house and the cottage.
- 3.1.2 Aldsworth Manor is orientated north-west to south-east with an east facing façade but for ease of description, it has been reoriented north to south in the following text.

3.2 External description

- 3.2.1 The manor house is built with irregularly sized, squared limestones with ashlar quoining to the corners and the openings (Plate 1). It features four bays over two storeys with a cellar and attic level. The roof is pitched and gabled, with smaller gables over the porch tower to the east front and the stair tower to the west rear. The roof structure is covered with stone tiles and there is a large stone chimney extending from the north gable, between the north bay and the bay to its south, and between the south bay and second bay from the south. There are two large, gabled dormer windows in the east side of the roof and in the west side are three smaller dormer windows with hipped roofs. The house sits on a stone paved terrace that was probably built in the 20th century (Plate 2). Around the front and sides of the terrace, where the house is built into an east to west incline, is a wall built with limestones that are more cobble-like than those of the house. On top of this wall is wide, flat, stone coping and ascending to the entrance on the east side is nine, wide, stone steps.
- 3.2.2 **The east elevation** is the façade of the house and faces over a lawn towards the village. It is a large, stone-built, double-fronted façade with a two-storey, central porch tower (Figure 2). There is a short plain, stone plinth and two stone string courses over the ground and first floors. There are two large, eight-light, casement windows to each side of the porch tower on both the ground and first floors (eight in total). The panes are leaded and the windows are 17th-century in character but the hollow mouldings of the stone mullions suggest an earlier date of perhaps the late 16th century. The porch tower is almost certainly a later addition to the house but it may replace an earlier, similar structure. In the ground floor of the east face of the porch tower is the entrance doorway to the house, which has a four-centred, arched opening with a decorative hood mould and a large, modern, panelled, wooden door. Above this in the first floor is a three-light casement window with leaded panes and

- a hood mould. In the north and south faces of the ground floor of the porch tower are small two-pane casement windows with leaded lights that illuminate the porch. On the top of the gable of the porch tower is a stone ball finial.
- 3.2.3 There has been a certain amount of maintenance to the stonework in the façade. There has been replacement of the stonework to the windows on the ground floor and on the north first floor, like for like, and this appears to be contemporary with the quoining and windows of the porch tower.
- 3.2.4 On the extreme south side of the elevation, in the ground and first floors, are blocked openings that appear to be doorways (Plate 3). It would be unusual to have doors to the exterior in these positions in a house of this type with its current form, and so their use may date to an earlier phase when the architectural arrangement was substantially different.
- 3.2.5 **The west elevation** has a much more irregular arrangement than the east façade, as is characteristic of 17th-century houses, and on the face of it, appears to be the most altered elevation of the house (Figure 2, Plate 4). In the centre of the elevation is a large, three-storey, gabled stair turret. This is offset slightly to the north so it is not in alignment with the porch tower to the east front. In each of the three floors of its west face are small, two-light casement windows with leaded panes. It is unknown if the stair turret is original to the 17th-century build but the straight joints would suggest that it is an addition, and perhaps replaced an earlier stair. A 20th-century addition to the elevation is the two-story, gabled structure abutting the south side of the stair turret, referred to as the back hall on plans. It is lower in height and a later catslide roof extends from the roof of the main house to meet its gable. In the ground floor of its west face is a single-light casement window and a two-light casement window, both with leaded panes. Over these, in the first floor, is a two-light casement window with leaded panes. In the ground floor of the south side of this structure is a door opening with a modern glazed door.
- 3.2.6 Abutting the north side of the stair turret is a small, stone-built structure with a lean-to roof that ascends south to north. It has a single-light casement with leaded panes in each of its west and north sides. This is another 20th-century addition as it houses modern services on the interior. To the immediate north of this is a door opening, the main backdoor to the house, with a modern, glazed door. The small, stone canopy over this doorway appears to be contemporary with the stonework of the lean-to. Over the doorway, in the first floor, is a large, eight-light casement window with stone mullions and leaded panes. On the north side of the elevation, in the ground and first floors, are small, two-light casement windows with leaded panes.
- 3.2.7 Some notable features of the west elevation are the unusually thick wall on the south side of the back hall extension. This curves, rather than steps outwards on its south side and has the appearance of a small turret but is otherwise featureless. It appears to be contemporary with the 17th-century house but its use is now hidden. It is perhaps the location of an earlier stair that the stair turret replaces. On the south side of this, in the first floor, is a blocked opening that appears to be a large window or a door. This is situated directly across from the blocked opening on the first floor of the east elevation.

- 3.2.8 **The south gable end** features a large twelve-pane casement window to each of its ground and first floors and a slightly shorter twelve-pane casement window in its attic level (Figure 3, Plate 2). The panes are leaded and the windows are 17th century in character but the hollow mouldings of the stone mullions suggest an earlier date of perhaps the late 16th century. The gable features three string courses and ashlar quoining to the corners.
- 3.2.9 **The north gable end** has two six-light casement windows with leaded panes in its ground floor and an eight-light casement window with leaded panes in the centre of its first floor (Figure 3). Like the casement windows throughout the other elevations, they appear to be 17th-century in character but the hollow mouldings may suggest an earlier date. The elevation has stone string courses to the ground, first and attic floor, and ashlar quoining to the corners.

3.3 Internal description

The Cellar

- 3.3.1 Aldsworth Manor is built over four bays running north to south, and underneath the east side of the two southern bays is stone-built, rib vaulted cellar, which predates the house in its current form (Figure 4). It is reached by means of a trapdoor in the floor of the sitting room, situated in the second bay from the north. The trapdoor itself looks to date to the 20th century and is contemporary with the timber floor. However, the steps that ascend north to south from the opening are of some age, and deep hollows are worn into the stone treads (Plate 5). The treads start about half a metre below the opening on the north side and it can only be assumed that the opening once extended further north to accommodate more steps, reaching ground level. Timber ladder steps have been placed over the existing treads for ease of access. The steps lead to a stone door opening with a chamfered, four-centred arch that provides access into the north chamber of the cellar. This chamber is separated from the south chamber by the large, stone chimney stack situated between the two southern bays, and they are connected by a narrow passage on its east side. The chambers are stone built with irregularly laid flagstone floors and have stone, segmental rib vaulting with chamfers traversing the ceilings east to west (Plate 6).
- 3.3.2 Where the west end of the northern most rib in the north chamber meets the wall is lower than the opening of the doorway to its immediate north. Behind the rib is some ironwork in the jamb of the doorway that a door would once hung from but would now be obstructed by the rib. This could suggest that the doorway predates the rib vaulting. Furthermore, between the northernmost rib and that to its immediate south, there is a straight joint in the wall featuring what appears to be ashlar quoining on the south side, which is almost certainly evidence of an earlier phase (Plate 7).
- 3.3.3 The north chamber features a crude 20th-century intervention. Supporting the centres of the ribs of the vaulting in the north chamber are concrete, breezeblock pillars and built against the east wall is a breezeblock wall that was presumably built for retaining purposes. Extending from this breezeblock wall to the centre of the

vaulting is a ceiling comprising north to south laid concrete slabs. These are supported on rolled steel joists and the breezeblock pillars on the west side.

- 3.3.4 The southern chamber has the remains of a timber door jamb on the west side of the opening to the short passage on the east side, suggesting a door was once hung here. In the east and south walls of the south chamber are splayed window openings. High up in the splayed opening on the east side is a small stone window opening with a leaded pane that still receives lights through an opening in the exterior terrace (Plate 8). That on the south side is completely blocked with modern concrete slabs and there is no evidence of an opening in the exterior terrace. Iron nails in the sides of the ribs of the vaulting in the southern chamber may indicate its use for hanging foods such as meat.
- 3.3.5 According to the previous owners of the house, locally the cellar is thought to be as early as 12th century in date.

The Ground Floor

- 3.3.6 Aldsworth Manor is entered through the ground floor of the porch tower on the east side, and through the back door and the doorway in the back hall on the west side. The ground floor of the porch tower has small, two-light casement windows in its north and south walls and a door opening with a modern door in its east wall. The floor is laid with stone flagstones and the room is painted white except for the quoining around the openings. The stone of the windows and the door in the east wall is clearly later than that of the doorway in the west wall (Plate 9).
- 3.3.7 **The Reception Hall** is entered from the porch. The ground floor of the manor house is formed into four bays and this represents the second bay from the south (Figure 5). All four walls of this room feature modern timber panelling and the floor is laid with modern floorboards. In the east wall, on the south side of the entrance doorway is a large, eight-light casement window with a window seat formed from the surrounding panelling. In the north wall is a door opening with chamfered, stone jambs and lintel that looks to be a modern addition. This has been infilled with modern timber shelving (Plate 10). It is possible that this doorway is original to the current architectural arrangement of the 17th-century house and was likely to be blocked in the 20th century. In the south wall is a large fireplace, the only original components of which appear to be the jambs of the opening. The back of the fireplace, as well as the small ledges built against the jambs and the stone surface on which the modern stove stands are all likely to have been built in the 20th century. To either side of the fireplace are doorways into the drawing room which feature 'jib' doors, formed of the same panelling as that on the surrounding walls to make them less conspicuous (Plate 11). Between the fireplace and the doorway on the west side is a cupboard in the panelling. On the west side of the reception hall is a doorway into the back hall with a similar 'jib' door as those into the drawing room.
- 3.3.8 To the north of this, the reception hall opens into the stair turret, in which is situated a fine elm staircase. Extending north from the corner between the north wall of the reception hall and the stair turret is a short passage that leads to the doorway into the north bays of the ground floor. The doorway features modern, glazed, double

doors and over these is a curious, gothic, stone arch (Plate 12). It appears to be incongruous with the architectural detailing of the 17th-century manor house and may be a 19th or 20th-century insertion.

- 3.3.9 **The drawing room** which makes up the south bay of the ground floor of the manor house, is entered through the jib doors at either side of the chimney stack between it and the reception hall. In the east and south walls are large casement windows, that in the east having eight lights with leaded panes and that in the south having twelve. The window in the south wall has fine pocket shutters with beaded panelling, 19th-century in appearance, and panelling in the splay below the window (Plate 13). Built into this a modern window seat. Both windows have historic, iron window catches that could plausibly be 17th-century in date (Plate 14).
- 3.3.10 On the north side of the room, surrounding the chimney stack that the drawing room shares with the reception hall, is what appears to be a large false wall, or false chimney breast, built around it (Plate 15). To either side of the modest stone fire surround, itself a modern insertion, are two large niches with four-centred arches and timber shelving. The moulded picture rail and beaded skirting board of the room go around this large false chimney breast indicating that they must be contemporary with it, or that they are good copies. Due to the nature of these modern insertions, it is difficult to ascertain the extent of the historic chimney stack but it is hollow sounding when knocked on.
- 3.3.11 **The sitting room** is located on the north side of the reception hall and on the south side of the dining room, which makes up the ground floor of the north bay. The sitting room represents the narrowest bay and it is somewhat unusual in the architectural arrangement of a manor house of this size, although the thickness of the walls suggests it is of some age. A passage with a modern flagstone floor runs between the reception hall and the dining room on the west side of the sitting room and a door in its east wall provides access to it. Although the room isn't as large as the others, it has some fine features such as the Victorian timber fire surround and marble hearth against the chimney breast on the north side and the pocket shuttering in the window opening on the east side (Plate 16). The window itself is an eight-light casement with leaded panes and an iron window catch. The shutters, as well as the panelling under the window and its architrave are all 19th-century in appearance. The door on the west side is a timber, hollow-core door with a brass pull-handle. The skirting board and carpet are likely to be contemporary with this. On the west side of the room, underneath the carpet is a trapdoor that leads to the cellar.
- 3.3.12 In the west wall of the passage that runs north to south across the west side of this bay are two doorways. That on the north side is the backdoor of the house, leading to the exterior, and has a modern, glazed door. That on the south side has a modern, timber, hollow-core door and it leads to the interior of the small lean-to built against the north side of the stair turret. The room has small, single-light casement windows with leaded panes on its west and north wall and is used for modern plant such as a boiler.

- 3.3.13 **The dining room**, which largely makes up the ground floor of the northern bay, is reached by means of the passage that runs north to south across the west side of the second bay from the north (in which is situated the sitting room). Built into the west side of this bay is a modern kitchen, which is accessed through a large doorway with a sliding, hollow-core door (Plate 17). Between the north wall of the dining room and the south-east corner of the modern kitchen partition walls is the doorway into the dining room. It is a modern doorway with a timber, hollow-core door. The dining room is a large open room with a flagstone floor. In the east wall is a large, eight-light casement window with leaded panes that is a modern replacement (Plate 18) and in the north wall is a six-light casement window with leaded panes. The north side of the east wall angles inwards creating a lintelled recess in which is a historic water pump. It is unknown if this is the original position of the water pump as it has been mounted on a timber board appearing to date to the 20th century and it is not connected to the ground but it is likely the recess was built for such a function (Plate 19). The dining room has a moulded picture rail and a plain skirting board that are likely be contemporary with the kitchen insertion. In the west wall of the dining room, that separating it from the kitchen, is another doorway with a hollow-core door on the north side.
- 3.3.14 The kitchen on the north side of the dining room, is a large, modern galley kitchen (Plate 20) that is likely to have been inserted during refurbishments in the 1970s, as characterised by the sliding, hollow-core door on the south side. In the north wall is a six-light casement window with leaded panes that is a modern replacement and in the west wall is a smaller, two-light casement. The timber kitchen units with applied mouldings along the east, west and north sides of the kitchen are likely to post-date the 1970s refurbishments as they appear to be more modern, perhaps dating to the 1980s or 90s. The floor is laid with modern linoleum.
- 3.3.15 A chimney stack that would have served the chimney in the north gable is now absent. It may have been removed when the modern windows were inserted into the ground floor or during an earlier phase of works.
- 3.3.16 **The back hall** is the ground floor of the later extension built against the south side of the stair turret and it is accessed through the jib door in the west wall of the reception hall. It is a modern room with a modern glazed door from the exterior in the south wall and a two-light casement window with leaded panes in the west wall. Under the window is a peach coloured, bathroom sink (Plate 21). A doorway with a hollow-core door in the north wall leads to a small WC with a more modern, white toilet. Over the toilet is a single-light, casement window with a leaded pane. A doorway with a hollow-core door to the immediate east of that into the WC leads to a small storage space. The sink and the tiling around it are 1970s in character and may indicate that the extension was built at this time. The floor has white tiling and the room is otherwise decorated with modern wallpaper.
- 3.3.17 A notable feature of this room is the wall to the immediate east of the doorway on the south side which stands proud by about half a metre (Plate 22). On the other side of this wall, on the exterior, is the turret like feature against the west elevation, the use of which is unexplained.

The First Floor

- 3.3.18 The first floor of Aldsworth Manor is reached by means of the large stair turret built on the west side of the house, which is potentially a later addition to the 17th-century build. Built into it is an unusual elm staircase that, according to the previous owners, was crafted locally by prisoners of the Napoleonic Wars (1805 – 13). It ascends east to west along the south wall to a half landing and turns west to east to the first floor along the north wall. The flight is repeated to the attic level from the first floor. The staircase comprises closed, elm treads and an elegant, elm handrail that curves around carved, rounded sections of elm, rather than classic newel posts (Plate 23). The narrow, plain balusters are likely to be a 20th-century replacement. There is evidence in the joints and grain of the staircase that it was once painted. The stair turret itself has two-light casement windows in its ground (under the staircase), first floor half-landing, and attic half-landing levels. At attic level, parts of the roof structure of the large gable of the stair turret can be seen. Two large purlins extend westwards from the roof of the manor house, supported by one visible pair of principal rafters (Plate 24).
- 3.3.19 On the first floor, the staircase opens onto a hallway that runs north to south along the west side of the manor house, providing access to the bedrooms (Figure 6). The hallway is modern in character with carpet, skirting boards and wallpaper that are 20th century in appearance (Plate 25). The doorways have timber hollow-core doors but that into the bedroom over the later back hall has the same gothic, stone arch seen in the doorways between the reception hall and the passageway to the back door on the ground floor. The doorway to the south bedroom is set into a recess that has a gothic arch and the opening between the north bay and the hallway has a gothic arch. The wallpaper over both of these may conceal similar stonework. In the west wall of the hallway, on the south side of the stair turret is a rectangular, splayed window opening with a stone, two-light window, behind which is timber panelling (Plate 26). The window opening itself almost certainly predates the extension on the south side of the stair turret and is now blocked by it. In the east side of the hallway is a built-in airing cupboard with double, hollow-core doors.
- 3.3.20 For east of description, the bedrooms have been numbered 1 to 5, moving anti-clockwise from the master bedroom at the south end of the manor house.
- 3.3.21 **Bedroom 1** is the south bay of the first floor of the manor house and is accessed through the doorway in the south end of the hallway. Like the drawing room below it in the ground floor, it is separated from the bay to its north with a large chimney stack. Here, as on the ground floor, the extent of the chimney stack is not known due to it being concealed by a false wall but there is no fireplace (Plate 27). At either side of the chimney breast are doorways, the west leading to the hallway and the east leading to the large bathroom in the bay to the north. The doorways have timber, hollow-core doors. In the east and south walls are large casement windows set into splayed openings. That in the east wall has eight lights with leaded panes and that in the south wall has twelve, and both windows have historic, iron, window catches. On the south side of the window in the east wall is a blocked door opening (which can be seen in the east elevation on the exterior). The moulded, stone door surround is

present but the blocked opening has been papered over (Plate 28). The door represents an earlier phase of the manor when the architectural arrangement must have been different as a door in this location in the façade of a manor house would be highly unusual. Bedroom 1 is otherwise 20th-century in character with modern, carpeting and skirting boards, and modern wardrobes built against the west wall. Against the south side of the wardrobe is a vertical ladder that leads to a hatch to the attic.

- 3.3.22 **The first floor bathroom** is located in the bay to the immediate north of bedroom 1. It is entered from the hallway on the west side and through the doorway from bedroom 1 on the east side of the chimney stack. The doorways both have modern, hollow-core doors. In the east wall is a large, eight-light casement window with leaded panes and historic, iron window catches. Between the sill and the lintel of the window is chamfered post with an upper jowl (Plate 29). Between the jowl of the post and the ceiling is a chamfered block of wood that appears to be bolted to the ceiling. This feature appears to have been inserted for structural support to the window and it is similar to those found supporting the windows in the attic (discussed further below). The bathroom is otherwise modern in character with a late 20th-century bathroom suite against the south wall (Plate 30), a modern shower unit in the north-west corner and built-in cupboard units in the north wall. The floor has a modern carpet and skirting boards.
- 3.3.23 **Bedroom 2** is on the north side of the first floor bathroom in the second bay from the north. It is entered through a doorway in the east side of the hallway with a modern, hollow-core door. In the east wall is a large, eight-light casement window with leaded panes and a historic, iron window catch. The room is otherwise 20th-century in character with modern carpeting and skirting boards, and built-in wardrobes along the south side. Along the north wall is modern shelving to either side of a narrow, blank chimney breast and a sideboard with cupboard units underneath. In the south wall is a hollow-core door that leads to an en-suite bathroom in the first floor of the porch tower (Plate 31). The bathroom has a classic 1970s style avocado suite with what appears to be the original tiling and a modern carpet (Plate 32). In the east wall is a three-light casement window with leaded panes.
- 3.3.24 **Bedroom 3** is located in the northernmost bay. On the west side of this bay is a lobby area reached through the gothic arched opening at the north end of the hallway. In the west wall of the lobby area is an eight-light casement window with leaded panes and a historic, iron window catch (Plate 33). A doorway in the east wall with a timber, hollow-core door leads to bedroom 3. In the east wall is a large, eight-light casement window with leaded panes and a historic, iron window catch (Plate 34) and against the south wall is a narrow chimney breast covered with a panel of cork-board. The room is otherwise 20th-century in character with carpeting and skirting boards that appear to be 1970s or 80s in date and there is a built-in wardrobe in the north wall.
- 3.3.25 **Bedroom 4** is on the north side of bedroom 3, in the north-east corner of the north bay. It is reached through a doorway with a hollow-core door in the north wall of the lobby. In the north wall is a large, eight-light casement window with leaded panes and a historic, iron window catch (Plate 35). The room is otherwise 20th-century in character with carpeting and skirting boards that appear to be 1970s or 80s in date

and there is a large, built-in wardrobe with double doors in the east wall. A vertical ladder against the north wall of the wardrobe leads to a hatch into the attic.

- 3.3.26 On the west side of bedroom 4 is a further bathroom (Plate 36). This has a bathroom suite that is more modern in appearance than the characteristically 1970s interiors in other rooms and may date to the 1990s. In the west wall is a two-light casement window with leaded panes. In the north-west corner of the ceiling is a visible corner of the roof structure from the attic above. The subdivisions that make up the lobby, the two bedrooms and the bathroom in the north bay are likely to be 20th-century insertions.
- 3.3.27 **Bedroom 5** is built over the back hall in the first floor of the extension that abuts the south side of the stair turret. It is reached through the doorway in the west side of the hallway under the stone, gothic arch. The doorway has a timber, hollow-core door. The floor level is lower than the hallway and two steps descend into the room. The ceiling slopes east to west under the catslide roof and the dormer window extends centrally from this (Plate 37). It is a two-light casement window with leaded panes. The room is otherwise 20th-century in character with modern carpeting, skirting boards, and a wardrobe on the south side. The walls and ceiling are entirely covered with 'Looney Toons' wallpaper. Unlike the back hall underneath it in the ground floor, the wall on the south side does not stand proud where the turret like feature on the exterior is built against it.

The Attic

- 3.3.28 The attic level of the stair turret opens onto the north end of a corridor that runs north to south across the west side of the attic between the north and south bays (Figure 6). The ceiling slopes downwards east to west under the pitch of the roof and a dormer window extends westwards from it. The window is a two-light casement with leaded panes. The corridor retains a 19th-century character with a beaded skirting board and doorways with 19th-century, four-panelled doors and broad, beaded architraves. The truss that is visible on the west side, however, features evidence of the attics earlier phase (Plate 38). In the underside of the principal rafter is a hollow mortise that is angled, suggesting it once would have housed a diagonal brace (Plate 39). A brace in this location would have obstructed the current corridor and so must have been removed when the partitions were inserted, perhaps in the 19th century. The truss features two sets of purlins; the lower 'back' purlins behind the mortise, and upper 'butt' purlins tenoned into the principal rafter where the collar meets it. The back purlins that rest on this principal rafter are two separate lengths of timber and the end of the southern length is resting on the end of the northern one. Wedges have been inserted in various places to strengthen the support of the joint under the roof and the principal rafter has substantial rolled steel joists bolted to either side of it, suggesting it may have been failing at some point. Along the west side, under the window, modern cupboards have been built and there is modern carpet on the ground. The corridor provides access to three further bedrooms, which are numbered 6 to 8, south to north.
- 3.3.29 **Bedroom 6** is entered through the doorway in the south end of the corridor. It is located in the southern gable of the manor house and retains a 19th-century

character. In the north wall is a modest, timber fireplace with an iron interior and a stone hearth (Plate 40). Over this is a small secondary timber mantle. The doors to either side of the chimney stack are angled, that on the west side facing south-east and that on the east side facing south-west. They are simple, 19th-century, four-panel doors with iron lock boxes and narrow, moulded architraves. The room widens on the south side of the doorways and the south facing walls at each side are panelled with tongue and groove, vertical boarding. In the south wall is a large, twelve-light casement window with leaded panes, which is shorter in height than those below it in the south walls of the ground and first floors. Two chamfered posts with upper jowls, like that in the first floor bathroom, support the lintel of the window and they are almost certainly contemporary with the 19th-century joinery in the room (Plate 41). Built into the lower pitch of the roof on the west side is a modern storage space with four cupboard doors. The top of the ladder that is built against the south side of the wardrobe in bedroom 1 below can be seen here but the opening has been blocked.

- 3.3.30 Across the ceiling on the south side of the chimney breast is a broad collar, which is at a higher level than that seen in the corridor. Along the east side, are two purlins at the same level as those seen joining the truss in the corridor. However, on the west side is a purlin at the same level as the collar, and although there is not one on the east side, it indicates that the roof originally had three sets of purlins. The cupboards lower down may conceal the lower purlin but the intermediary purlin is not present. It seems evident that lengths of purlins have been removed, perhaps in the 19th century.
- 3.3.31 **Bedroom 7** is situated to the north of bedroom 6. They are connected by means of a small storage space on the east side of the chimney stack with 19th-century tongue and groove partitions. The doorway into the storage space from bedroom 7 has a narrow, moulded architrave that is 19th-century in date but the door is a hollow-core door that is more modern in appearance than those throughout the ground and first floors. The doorway from the corridor on the west side has a narrow, moulded, 19th-century architrave also but the door has been removed. Against the chimney breast in the south wall is a modest, timber fireplace with an iron interior and a stone hearth (Plate 42). Over it, the chimney breast steps in and has a secondary, timber mantle on it. A dormer window opening extends from the east side of the room, which features a timber-framed, three-light casement window with leaded panes dating to the 20th-century. This appears to be 20th-century in date. On the north side of this is 20th-century, built-in storage space with double doors on its west side. The visible truss in the room is the other side of that seen in the corridor. It has two collars, the lower of which can be seen in the corridor and is a modern insertion. The upper purlin is also visible but the lower two have been cut for the dormer window, which may have been built in the 19th-century to illuminate the attic accommodation.
- 3.3.32 **The Attic Bathroom** is situated between bedroom 7 and bedroom 8, which makes up the north end of the attic. The doorway from the corridor has a 19th-century, four-panel door with an iron lock box and a narrow, moulded architrave. The bathroom suite is discernibly more modern than the 1970s and 80s interiors in much of the rest

of the house and is likely to have been fitted in the 21st-century. The room features laminate flooring, a modern skirting board and a Velux window in the pitched roof on the east side. Built into the north wall is a large storage space with two doors, side by side, and two overhead cupboards, inside which is an airing cupboard and services. In a recess on the east side of the storage space, a truss can partially be seen (Plate 43). A curved brace supports the principal rafter and may be further evidence that the truss in the corridor once housed a similar timber. There is evidence here also that the intermediary purlin has been cut for the insertion of the window. However, it is unlikely that this occurred for the modern Velux window and it is likely that it replaces an earlier window of some kind. A ledge with tongue and groove boarding along the east side under the window may conceal the lower purlin.

3.3.33 **Bedroom 8** is entered through a doorway in the north end of the corridor with a 19th-century, four-panel door, an iron lock box and a narrow, moulded architrave. It is a large room that takes up the north bay and partially takes up the next bay to the south. The chimney breast that separates these bays stands in isolation towards the south end of bedroom 8 (Plate 44). It has no fireplace and has modern shelving units against its south and west sides. Two dormer openings featuring timber-framed, two-light casement windows with leaded panes extend from the west side of the pitched ceiling. The windows are 20th-century in date. A further dormer opening extends from the west side and the casement window here has three lights with leaded panes, also dating to the 20th century. These windows are likely to be contemporary with the 19th-century joinery in the attic. Against the west gable is 20th-century shelving and along the west wall, under the windows, is a 20th-century sideboard.

3.3.34 Various elements of the roof structure of the manor house are visible in this room. The principal rafters of two trusses can be seen as well as the intermediary butt purlins. Supporting the truss on the south side are large struts, which presumably rest on a beam concealed by the step. Tenoned into the struts, and running parallel underneath the principal rafters, are diagonal braces, themselves supported by two shorter struts. In the north-east corner of the room is the doorway into a small storage space and the lower purlin of the east side of the roof can be seen here, resting in the stonework of the north gable (Plate 45). Above it are the historic common rafters and at least one modern common rafter. Here, unlike other rooms where the purlins were cut, it is likely to be concealed underneath the windows.

3.4 The Cottage

3.4.1 The cottage is situated to the rear of the manor house on the west side, on an elevated area of ground. It was previously a coach-house that was converted to a cottage in the 1980s by the previous owners. It is a small gabled structure, orientated north to south, with its façade facing the manor house and its west wall abutting the garage behind it. Elevated over it on the west side is a terrace where the garages of the property are located (discussed further below). It is built with irregularly coursed limestone and the roof is covered with stone tiles (Plate 46). Built on to the south side is a later, single-storey lean-to structure, built of stone with a stone tile roof. Where the east end of one of the garage buildings joins the roof on the west side of the cottage, it rises to meet it with a hipped peak.

External Description

- 3.4.2 In the east front of the cottage is a central doorway with a modern, timber door. On the north side of this is a small, modern two-light window. On the south side of the door is a larger, modern eight-pane window. The doorway was previously taller than the door and the gap above it has been infilled and covered with stone tiles. The larger window on the south side too appears to have been built into a wide opening, large enough for a wagon, and the gap above has been infilled and covered with stone tiles. The gap below it has been infilled with stone. There are large timber lintels over both of these openings. Extending from the roof structure on the east side are two gabled, dormer windows with modern, four-light windows. In the north gable wall is a modern, six-light window, and over the lean-to, in the south gable, is a small, square, modern window with a single pane. The lean-to has a doorway with a modern timber door in its east wall, a modern, two-light window in its south wall, and small Velux window in its roof.
- 3.4.3 A wall for the garage on the terrace runs along the north side from the gable of the cottage in which are large, timber double doors, locked the time of survey (Figure 7). Built against the wall on the west side of the doors is a small, stone-built outhouse with a timber door in the east wall and a wooden slat toilet inside (Plate 47). This appears to be of some age but is not visible on the OS maps in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Interior Description

- 3.4.4 The cottage is divided into two bays, north and south (Figure 8). It is entered through the doorway in its east elevation and it opens into the north bay, a small sitting room with a bare, stone wall on its south side (Plate 48). In the north and east walls are the window openings, over which are historic, timber lintels. A timber beam that crosses the ceiling, east to west, has signs of being machine cut, indicating that it is later and likely to have been inserted when the building was converted. The room has modern carpeting, skirting boards and light fittings to the walls. Modern, glazed double doors have been inserted into a gap in the stonework on the south side. These doors open into the south bay.
- 3.4.5 The south bay of the cottage is a small kitchen-dining room with modern kitchen units along the east and south sides. Against the west wall is a modern staircase that ascends south to north (Plate 49). It has closed treads and is enclosed with a glass panel on its east side. The wall that divides the bays has bare stonework on this side also. The beam that crosses the ceiling east to west has signs of being machine cut, indicating it was probably put in when the cottage was converted from outhouses. In the south wall is a doorway with a modern, glazed door that leads to the lean-to. The room otherwise has modern carpeting, skirting boards and light fittings to the walls. There is modern linoleum around the kitchen units that is the same as that in the kitchen of the manor house, suggesting changes were made to both buildings at the same time.
- 3.4.6 The interior of the lean-to is modern in appearance with kitchen units and a Belfast sink against the south wall under the window (Plate 50). The ceiling has modern,

timber panelling and the floor is tiled. There are two doorways in the west wall with modern, timber, four-panel doors. Inside the south doorway is a small modern WC and in through the north doorway is a storage space. A doorway in the east wall with a modern timber door leads to the exterior.

- 3.4.7 The stairs to the attic level of the cottage open onto a small landing on the west side (Plate 51). On the east side is a doorway into a modern bathroom and on the north and south sides are doorways into two small bedrooms (Figure 9). Another doorway between that of the bathroom and the north bedroom leads to a small space with a boiler. This upper floor is clearly a modern insertion with modern subdivisions of space. The joinery, skirting boards, doorways and windows are all modern and appear to be contemporary with each other.

3.5 The Garages

- 3.5.1 The garages are situated on a wide terrace elevated over the manor house on the west (Plate 52). These were altered substantially by the previous owners in the 1980s. The flagstone paved terrace is reached by means of a small road that turns from the road that runs southwards from the east front of the manor house, and runs northwards and up the hill. The garages comprise two linear buildings. That on the north side of the terrace is orientated east to west and extends eastwards from the cottage. That on the west side of the terrace is orientated north to south, running perpendicular to the north garage (Figures 8 & 9). The west garage, which faces east over the terrace, has six bays, denoted by six large garage doors along its east side (Figure 10). These are modern timber doors but the gable end walls on the north and south sides are stone and likely to be earlier. The pitched roof is covered with stone tiles. On the interior, the shell of the building is lined with concrete breezeblocks on the north, west and south sides (Plate 53). The space is divided into two large rooms with a smaller vestibule room between them, behind which is a narrow, closed staircase that ascends west to east to the roof space over the larger, northern room. The partitions are built with plywood boards (Plate 54). The roof space has a floor made from plywood boards over a series of east to west running, softwood joists. Along the west side of the roof are four Velux windows, two of which illuminate the room on the south side and two of which illuminate the roof space. There is also a modern, four-light picture window in the south gable of the garage.
- 3.5.2 The north garage was not accessible at the time of survey but it is a two-storey structure that runs westwards from the cottage. The ground floor is reached through the double doors westwards of the north side of the cottage through a stone wall. The plans show it as being an open space with a small room for an oil tank on the east side (Figure 8). The upper storey is accessed by means of four, large, timber garage doors, separated by modern stone pilasters, along the south side. The plan of the building shows the upper floor as being an open space also with what appears to be a pillar in the centre towards the north side (Figure 9). A section of the building shows a king post roof that may be original and a catslide roof over the lower floor, which is likely to be a later addition.

4 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Aldsworth Manor is a Grade II listed building and is a part of the Aldsworth Conservation Area. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 4.1.2 The village of Aldsworth is a small rural settlement in the Cotswolds that has depended largely on sheep farming for over a millennium. It has a variety of well conserved, traditionally built dwellings that define the character of typical Cotswolds villages. Buildings dating from the medieval period to the 19th century, formed around small intersecting roads forming a largely unchanged plan give it a distinctive historic character. Aldsworth Manor is a highly significant part of this context.
- 4.1.3 Aldsworth Manor, located slightly south-west within the village, and to the immediate east of St Batholomew’s Church, has a prominent position in the early settlement, indicating that it is of some age and has been significant to life in the village for some time. The current house represents a rebuild that occurred in the mid-17th century, replacing an earlier structure or structures. The cellar is evidence of an earlier phase or phases and there is likely to be more early fabric in the standing walls. The manor house evolved as a part of its setting and has continued to contribute aesthetically to its context but within the house is the archaeology of early phases of the village that have become somewhat hidden in the past several hundred years. The interior of the building, and to a lesser extent, the exterior, continued to change in the 19th and 20th centuries. Changes in the 20th century somewhat impacted its historic character and elements of its 17th-century arrangement were lost. Despite the incongruous 20th-century interiors, however, its historic fabric is largely intact. Its many phases and the influence of those who inhabited it over several centuries are evident, giving the house a charming multi-phase character.

4.2 Statement of Significance

- 4.2.1 Aldsworth Manor has ***considerable evidential value***. The 17th-century house survives with a high level of preservation of its original fabric in the form of its outer walls, chimney stacks and roof structure, and the arrangement of its original bays can largely be discerned from this. However, it almost certainly also incorporates fabric predating this 17th-century reconstruction. The cellar is the most significant evidence of this, itself having at least two phases, and may be a part of a medieval grange that existed before the current house. The irregularity of the bays and the misalignment of the front and rear entrance may suggest that it once existed as two dwellings and evidence of this, as well as evidence of more than one phase of construction, is likely to exist in its structure. Further investigation of its structure also has the potential to reveal the purpose of the turret like structure on the rear of the building.

- 4.2.2 Aldsworth Manor has ***significant historical associative value*** as it is associated with several influential families in the village, as well as Oseney Abbey and Christ Church in Oxford, the history of which is well documented. It is of a similar date to many of the historic buildings around it that were built due to the prosperity of sheep farming in the area. It is a property that attracted many lessees that contributed to life in the village and its role in the development of the settlement over several hundred years hugely adds its local significance.
- 4.2.3 Aldsworth Manor has ***considerable historical illustrative value*** as the 17th-century manor house has a high level of preservation, particularly viewed from the exterior, and it is typical of a small manor house of its type dating to this period. Visually, it can be appreciated as a dwelling that has a strong historical relationship with its setting and amplifies the significance of surrounding dwellings.
- 4.2.4 Aldsworth Manor has ***significant aesthetic value*** due to the high level of preservation of the 17th-century house and its context. Its fine, double-fronted façade with large stone mullioned windows faces north-east towards the heart of the village. Its garden and setting has not been encroached upon in any significant way and adds to the charming view, particularly from the approach to the north. It is set back from the road and behind a gate but has prominence on the hill and is highly visible. As such, it enhances the historic character of its setting.

5 IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Aldsworth Manor is a part of the Aldsworth Conservation Area and a Grade II listed building. As such, any alterations must be considered individually and their benefits weighed up against their impact to the significance and historic character of the structure, its context and its setting. Included in the impact assessment are the current draft proposals for the cottage.

5.1.2 The proposed alterations to Aldsworth Manor entail;

- The addition of a single-storey kitchen/family room to the north elevation, a boot room to the west elevation and a small, single-storey orangery to the south elevation, which would join the current back hall on the west rear;
- The widening of the entrance doorway in the ground floor of the 20th-century porch tower and the removal of the 20th-century paved terrace surrounding the house;
- The replacement of the current dormer windows on the east front with four evenly spaced dormer windows;
- The removal of the 20th-century concrete and steel supports in the cellar and the insertion of new access from the ground of the stair turret through the west wall of the north chamber;
- The removal of the kitchen in the west side of the dining room, the blocking of the doorway in the north wall of the reception room, and the partitions in the back hall, all dating to the 20th-century;
- The removal of the modern panelling in the reception room and the modern material around the chimney stack that separates the drawing room and the reception room, as well as the reinstatement of the inglenook;
- The removal of the modern, solid flooring and their various surfaces from the ground floor, to be replaced with modern underfloor heating and more appropriate floor surfaces;
- The rearrangement of non-structural modern partitions on the first floor and replacement of modern joinery;
- The removal of partitions in the attic, including part of the south wall of bedroom 8 to incorporate the storage space of the adjacent bathroom, and the removal of the cupboards in bedroom 7.

5.1.3 The proposed draft alterations to the outhouses entail;

- The replacement of all doors and windows to the cottage including the modern infill of earlier opening to the east facing front;

- Replacement of the existing doorway between the north and south bay on the interior of the cottage and the rearrangement of modern partitions in the lean-to and the attic level.

5.2 Impact of proposed alterations

Exterior

- 5.2.1 The proposed single-storey kitchen/family room and orangery to the north and south elevations, respectively, will certainly have a visual impact on the current form of the manor house. However, it is considered that both the symmetry of these proposed extensions, as well as their positioning behind the façade of the historic house, mitigate this visual impact. The materials and design of the extensions have been thoughtfully considered so as to be sympathetic to the 17th-century house but not pastiche, and will sit comfortably in the setting of the surrounding village. They reflect a tasteful and proportionate 21st-century evolution of the property, embodying modern architectural ideals in terms of sustainability and energy efficiency.
- 5.2.2 The proposed kitchen/boot room will require the removal of the window in the north wall of the existing kitchen. This window is a 1980s insertion and although historic fabric underneath the window will be removed, it is considered to have no impact on the historic character or significance of the house.
- 5.2.3 The addition of the boot room and the extension of the back hall to meet the orangery will require no removal of historic fabric and will have a very low visual impact to the setting and historic character as they are hidden from public view.
- 5.2.4 It is proposed that the current paved terrace around the manor house is removed and that the entrance doorway is widened. Both the terrace and the porch tower were added to the house in the 1970-80s and although the removal of the terrace will have a visual impact to the setting, it will not detract from the historic character or significance of the building. The terrace will be replaced with banks and visually, the house will return to a more 17th-century, rustic aesthetic.
- 5.2.5 The removal of the two existing, 20th-century dormer windows and the 20th-century roof light and their replacement with four dormers more in character would have a positive visual impact and no impact on the historic significance of the house. The insertion of new dormer windows would entail the removal of some common rafters but larger, historic structural timbers would not be interfered with.

The Cellar

- 5.2.6 The proposed removal of the 20th-century concrete and steel supports in the cellar would significantly improve its historic character and enhance visibility of the rib vaulting, which is considered to be some of the oldest fabric in the house. The breeze block pillars are intrusive to the space of the north chamber and their removal will make it more useful as a storage area, which is its original function. Keeping a space in use facilitates its consistent maintenance. The removal of heavy concrete floors in the ground floor of the manor house is likely to mitigate the impact of this

intervention being removed if it was inserted for structural support. It is proposed that structural support that is more sensitive to the space will be inserted if needed.

5.2.7 The proposed new access to the cellar would have an impact on the historic fabric of the cellar as it would necessitate the removal of stonework from the west wall of the north chamber. It would also involve excavation under the stair turret. However, providing new and safer access to the cellar would mean the preservation of the historic steps on the north side, which are highly significant as original fabric but unsafe to use due to the hollows worn in them from hundreds of years of use. It is considered that loss or alteration to these steps, which add significant character the cellar, would have a larger impact than the proposed access.

5.2.8 Oxford Archaeology proposes that a watching brief by an archaeologist be maintained during the removal of any historic fabric to prevent information relevant to the origins of the surrounding structures being lost.

The Ground Floor

5.2.9 It is proposed that the kitchen in the west side of the dining room, the blocking of the doorway in the north wall of the reception room, and the partitions in the back hall be removed. These were added in the 1970-80s their loss will not impact on the historic character or significance of the manor house. Indeed, it is considered that the removal of the subdivisions inside the house will enhance the historic character of the ground floor.

5.2.10 The removal of the modern panelling in the reception hall and the removal of modern material around the chimney stack separating the reception hall and the drawing room will have an overall positive impact. These alterations will enhance the historic character and improve the dimensions of the drawing room, returning it to 17th-century proportions. Oxford Archaeology proposes, however, that a watching brief by an archaeologist be maintained during the removal of material around the chimney stack to advise on the extent of existing historic fabric and to record it once exposed.

5.2.11 The removal of the modern, solid flooring and their various surfaces from the ground floor will have no impact on the historic character or significance of the house. Indeed, they're replacement with more appropriate surfaces will have a positive impact.

The First Floor

5.2.12 Proposed alterations to the first floor involve some rearrangement of the modern partitions and the replacement of dated 1970-80s joinery such as doors, architraves and skirting boards. This will have no impact on the historic fabric or the significance of the manor house.

The Attic

5.2.13 The proposed minor removal of partitions in the attic, including part of the south wall of bedroom 8 to incorporate the storage space of the adjacent bathroom, and the removal of the cupboards in bedroom 7, will have little impact on the historic fabric and no impact on its overall significance. The Victorian joinery, which along

with the exposed timbers of the roof, represent the historic character of the attic, are being retained.

The Outhouses

- 5.2.14 The replacement of all doors and windows to the cottage, and the modern infill of earlier opening to the east facing front will have no impact on its significance or historic character.
- 5.2.15 Replacement of the existing doorway between the north and south bay on the interior of the cottage and the rearrangement of modern partitions in the lean-to and the attic level will not effect the historic fabric of the cottage and will have no impact on its significance or historic character.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 Aldsworth Manor is characteristic of houses of this size and status dating to the 17th century but there is some evidence of phases that predate its current form. We know that there was a building or buildings in this location before the 16th century as John Blomer, the tenant who took it on in 1544 was “to rebuild the ruinous house” (Stawell, 2002). The house was again rebuilt, most likely in the mid-17th century, by Henry Powle who was lessee at the time. An early 18th-century legal document refers to a ‘new-built dwelling house... of stone, timber and other materials... The said new house consisteth of four rooms below stairs and four above with a garret over’. This is almost certainly Aldsworth Manor largely in its current form. The previous house is again referred to as ‘ruinous’ and it is plausible that some of the fabric of this survived in the existing house as the architecture is not entirely uniform. The bays are not the same dimensions, which may be evidence that the manor house was formed around an earlier structure or structures that the uneven widths accommodate. The uneven roof line between the south bay and the other bays to the north may be further evidence of this, but this may also be explained by the fact that the large chimney stack between them is load bearing for the ridge pieces. The entrance doorway to the reception hall in the east façade is not in alignment with the stair turret on the rear of the building and the unusually thick walls around the sitting room, the narrowest bay in the house, are all anomalous features.
- 6.1.2 The cellar is the oldest element of the manor house. Locally, its origins are thought to be in the 12th century, which is plausible. It has a doorway that looks to predate the rib vaulting as the northern most rib would obstruct a door hung on the present ironwork of the opening. The cellar is located under the two southern bays of the house indicating that these may be older than the northern half of the house. The chimney stack may be a later addition, subdividing the space. Further evidence that the southern half of the house has earlier phases can be seen in the blocked openings at ground and first floor in the south end of the east elevation, and the blocked opening in the first floor of the south end of the west elevation. These openings, particularly the door openings in the east front, are out of keeping with the existing architectural arrangement and suggest an arrangement that predates the current form of the house, which the records suggest is a 17th-century rebuild or remodelling.
- 6.1.3 Lord Sherborne again refurbished the house in the 19th century. He is known to have laid the road that passes the front of the house and perhaps did further landscaping to the property. Inside, evidence of the 19th-century refurbishment can mainly be seen in the arrangement and joinery in the attic but it possible that other 19th-century fabric survives, hidden by 20th-century alterations. For example, the floor structures of the first floor may have been inserted by Lord Sherborne in 1837, before which they had been described as ‘unusable’ in the 1835 Christ Church records. The fine elm staircase is thought by the previous owners to have been built locally by prisoners of the Napoleonic Wars (1805 – 13).

- 6.1.4 The house was clearly renovated substantially in the 1970s by Captain Peter Percy, and he is likely to have added (or replaced) the porch tower and the two extensions to the stair turret on the rear elevation, as well as the terrace around the house. It is notable that these interiors have been retained to such a degree in the intervening fifty years, giving much of the house a distinctly 1970s character. Hollow-core doors were commonly used in the mid to late 20th-century and the avocado suite of the first floor bathroom, in particular, is somewhat iconic of 1970s interior design. The subdivision of the first floor could be an entirely 20th-century arrangement with the only 17th-century fabric appearing to be the exterior walls and chimney stacks. The arrangement of the rooms, bathrooms and built-in wardrobes are all common features of post-war, 'modern' family homes. With the exception of the chamfered post in the window in the bathroom, there is no 19th-century joinery visible on the first floor but this is not to say that 19th-century fabric is not present. The false walls around the chimney stack in the south bay are also late 20th century in date and their removal would reveal some significant structural fabric of the 17th-century house.
- 6.1.5 In conclusion, the house is a fine example of a small 17th-century manor house and despite the incongruous 20th-century interiors, its historic fabric is largely intact. Its many phases and the influence of those who inhabited it over several centuries are evident, giving the house a charming multi-phase character that makes it highly significant to its setting. The proposed alteration would have a very minor impact on the significant historic fabric of the house. They would necessitate the removal of some fabric from the north gable where a doorway would be inserted and some removal of common rafters from the roof where dormer windows are to be rearranged. These works would not have any considerable impact on the historic character of the house. The proposed works where 20th-century interventions are to be removed will have a positive impact as much of this fabric does nothing to enhance the historic character of the house. Indeed, much of it detracts from and obscures the 17th-century character and its removal, such as in the cellar and around the chimney stack, will expose significant fabric. The addition of the extensions to the north and south elevations will have a visual impact on the property and its setting. However, it is considered that both the symmetry of these proposed extensions, as well as their positioning behind the façade of the historic house, mitigate this visual impact. The materials and design of the extensions have been thoughtfully considered so as to be sympathetic to the 17th-century house but not pastiche, and will sit comfortably in the setting of the surrounding village. They reflect a tasteful and proportionate 21st-century evolution of the property, embodying modern architectural ideals in terms of sustainability and energy efficiency.

APPENDIX A BIBLIOGRAPHY

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 Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA,

Figure 1: Site location



DATUM: 120.00M ODN

 EAST ELEVATION



DATUM: 120.00M ODN

 WEST ELEVATION



Figure 2: The east and west elevations of Aldsworth Manor



DATUM: 120.00M ODN

 NORTH ELEVATION



DATUM: 120.00M ODN

 SOUTH ELEVATION

0 5m
1:125

Figure 3: The north and south elevations of Aldsworth Manor

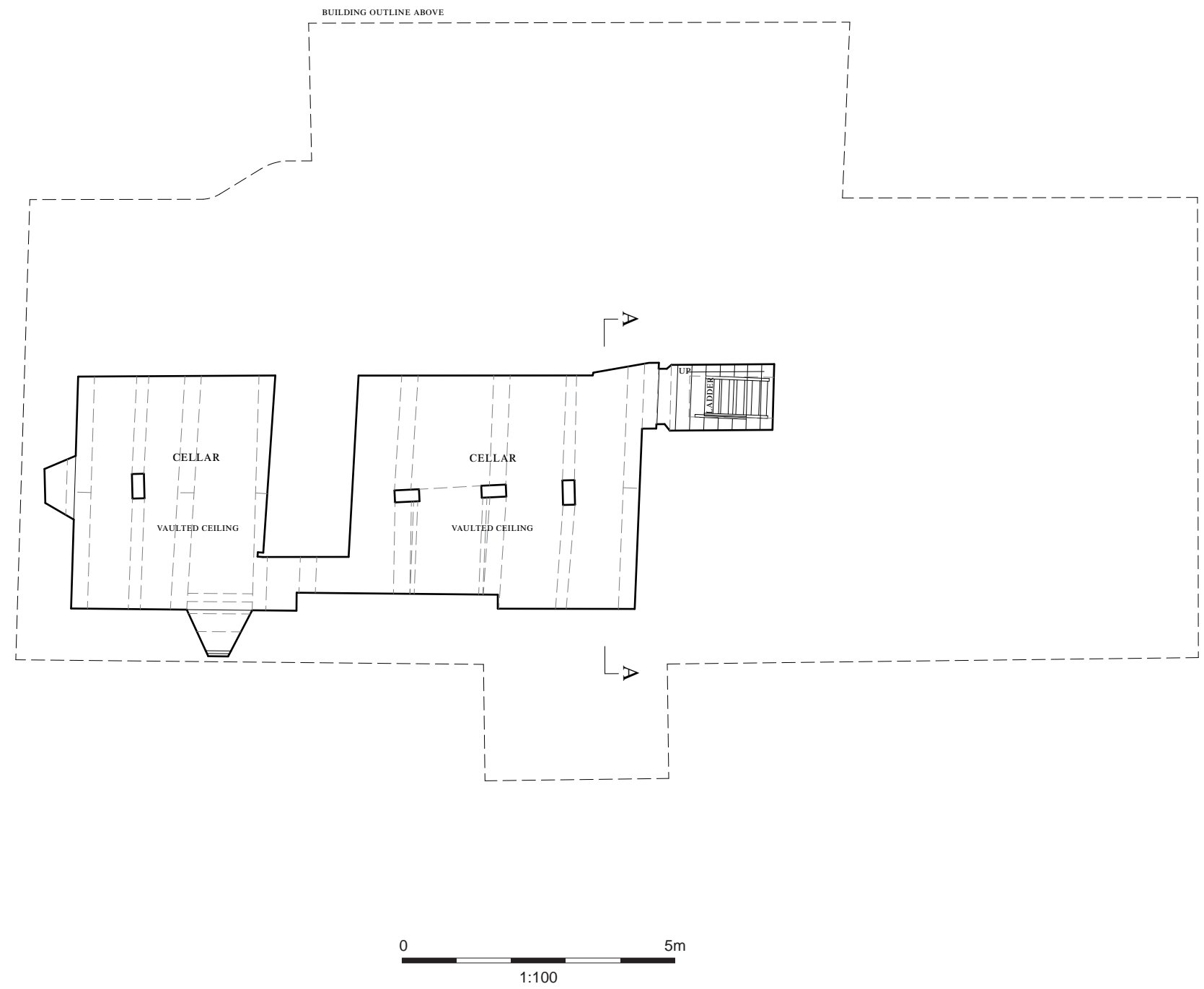


Figure 4: Plan of the Cellar of Aldsworth Manor

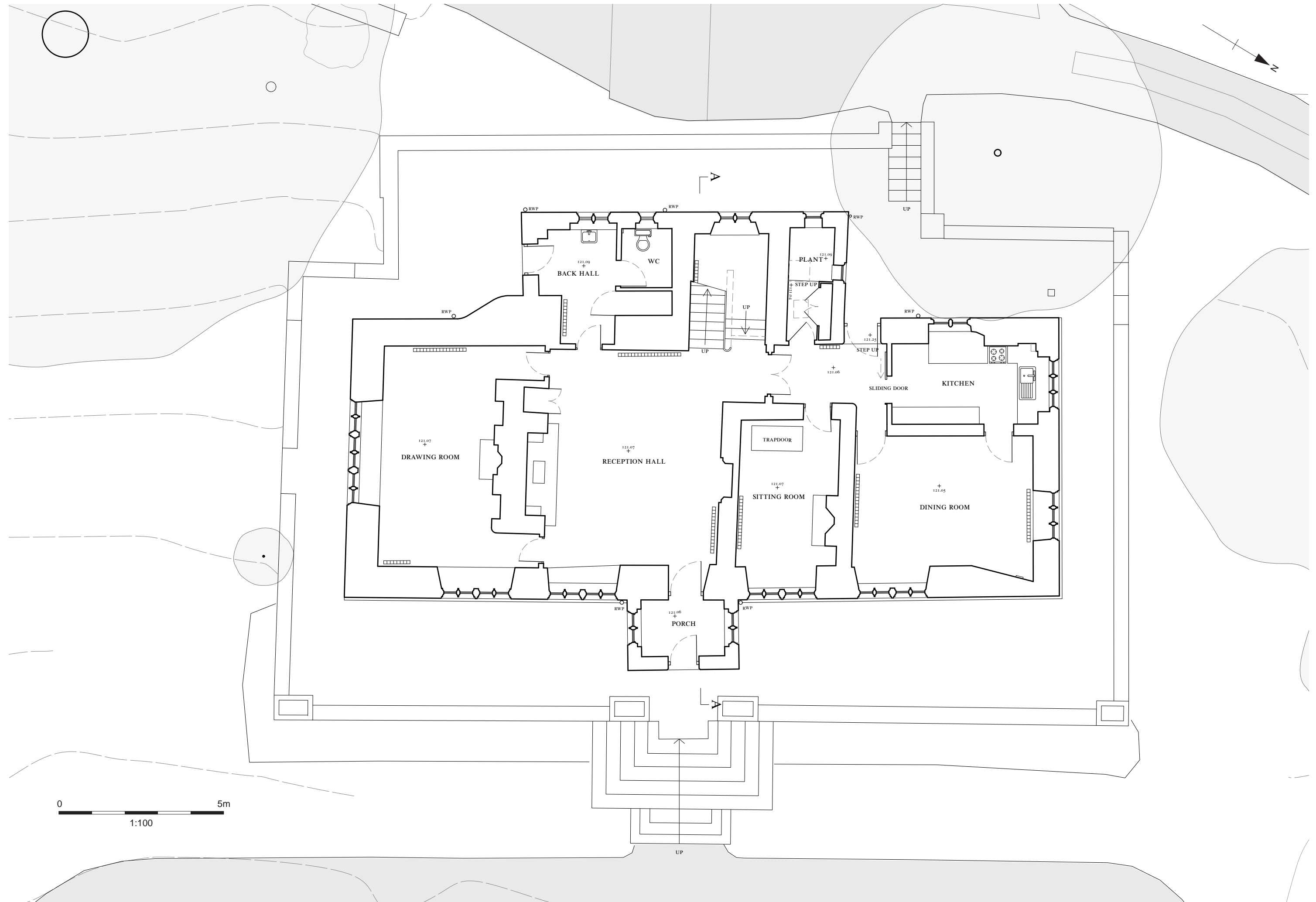


Figure 5: Ground floor plan of Aldsworth Manor

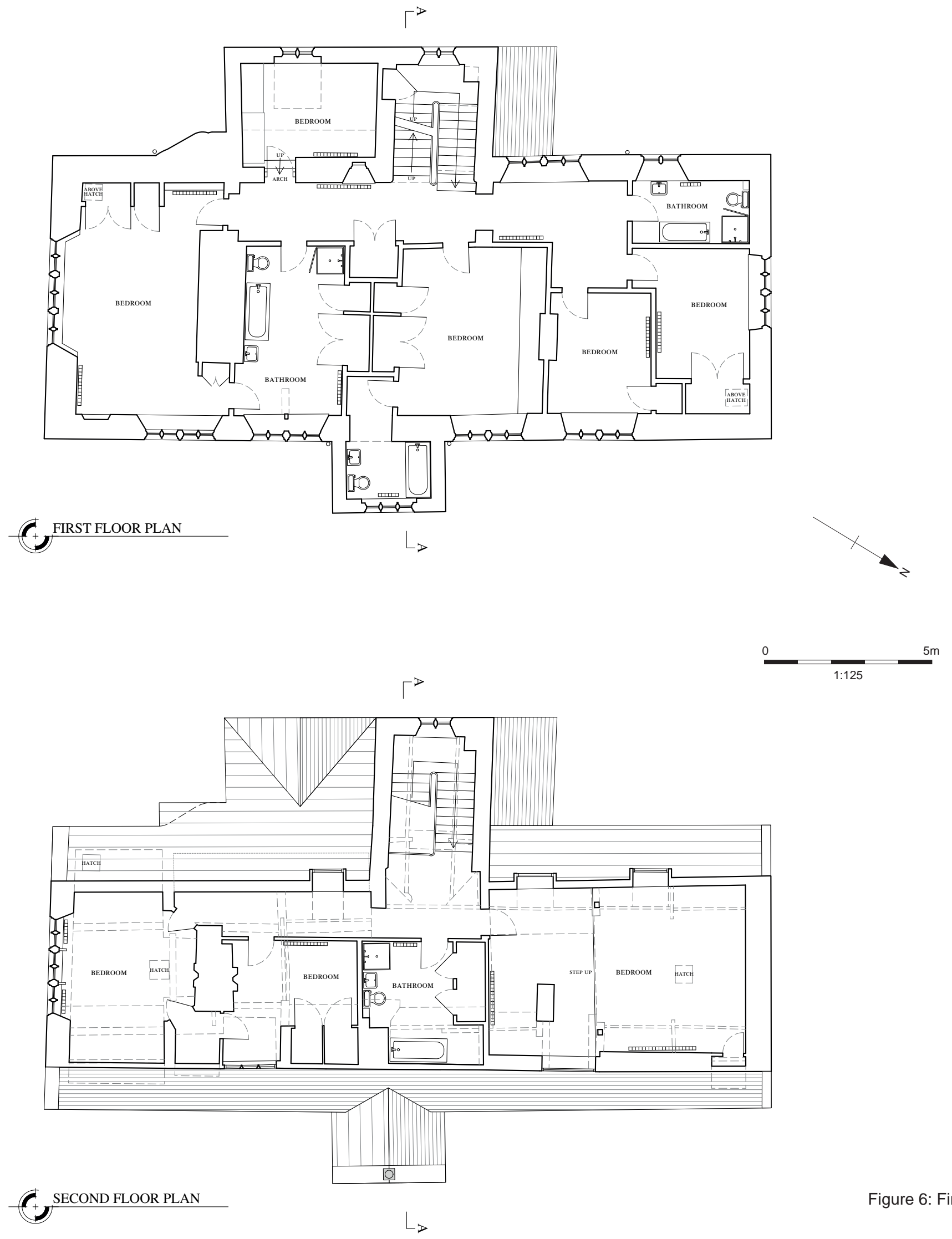
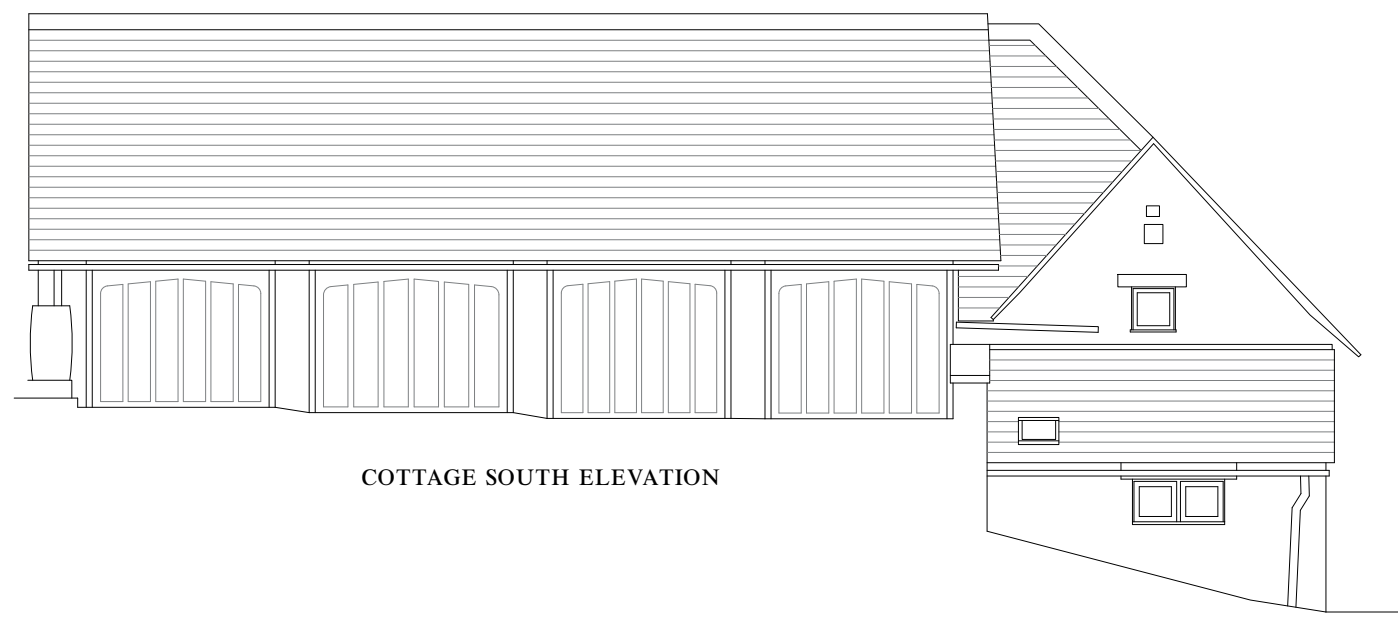


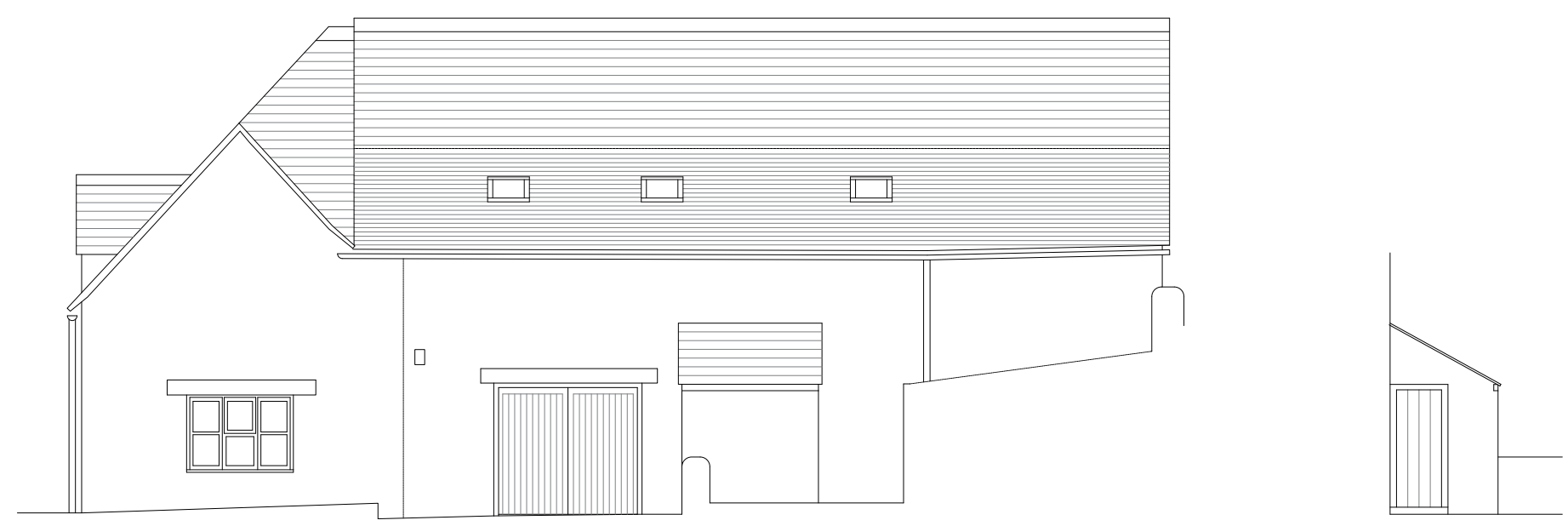
Figure 6: First floor and attic level plans of Aldsworth Manor



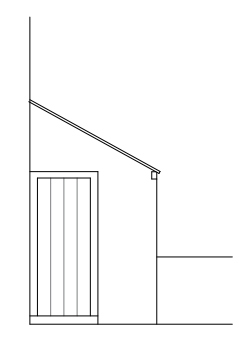
COTTAGE SOUTH ELEVATION



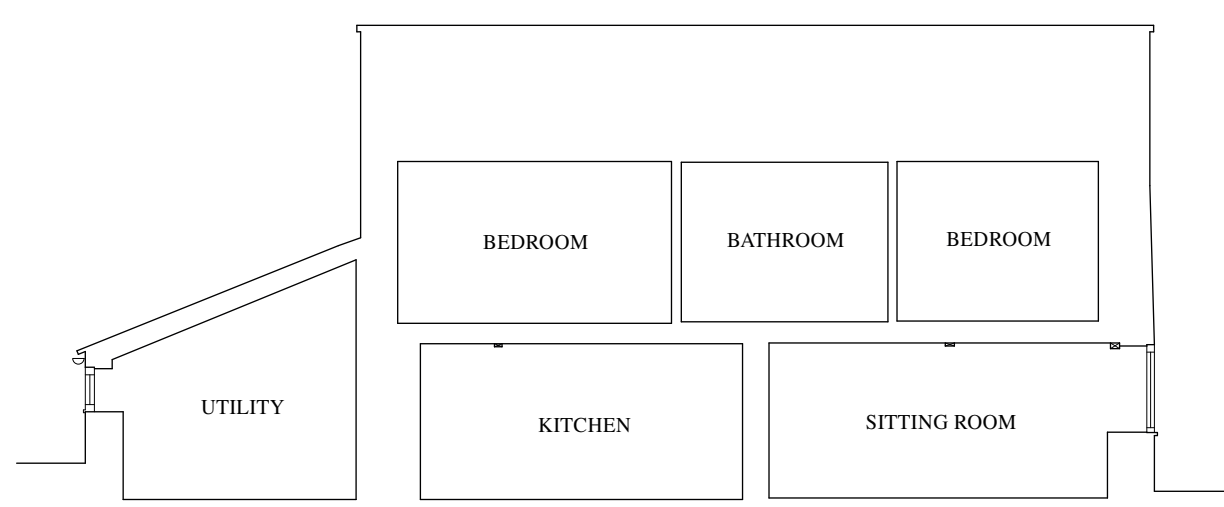
COTTAGE EAST ELEVATION



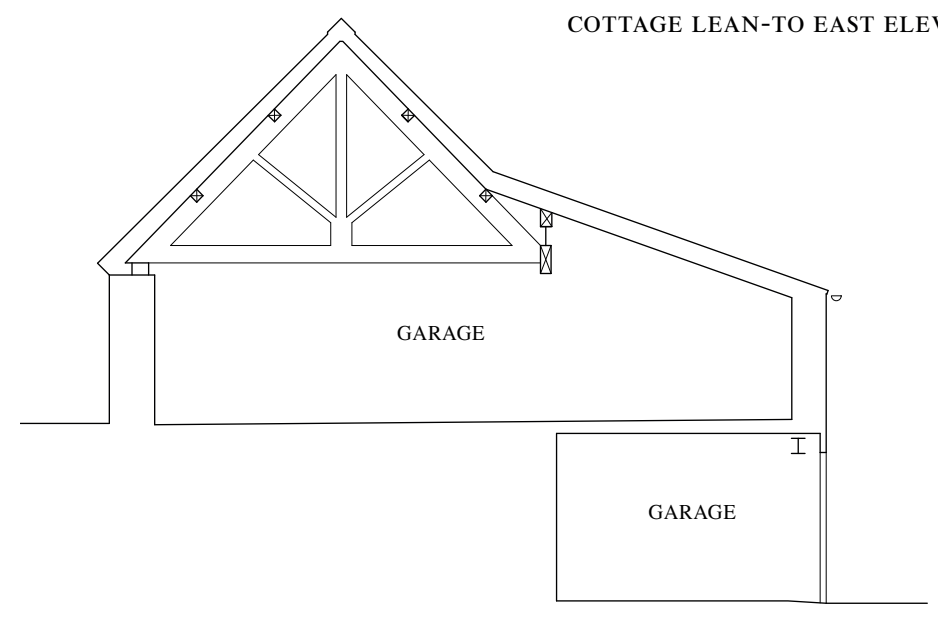
COTTAGE NORTH ELEVATION



COTTAGE LEAN-TO EAST ELEVATION



SECTION B-B



SECTION C-C



Figure 7: The south, east and west elevations of the cottage and the north garage, and sections through the buildings

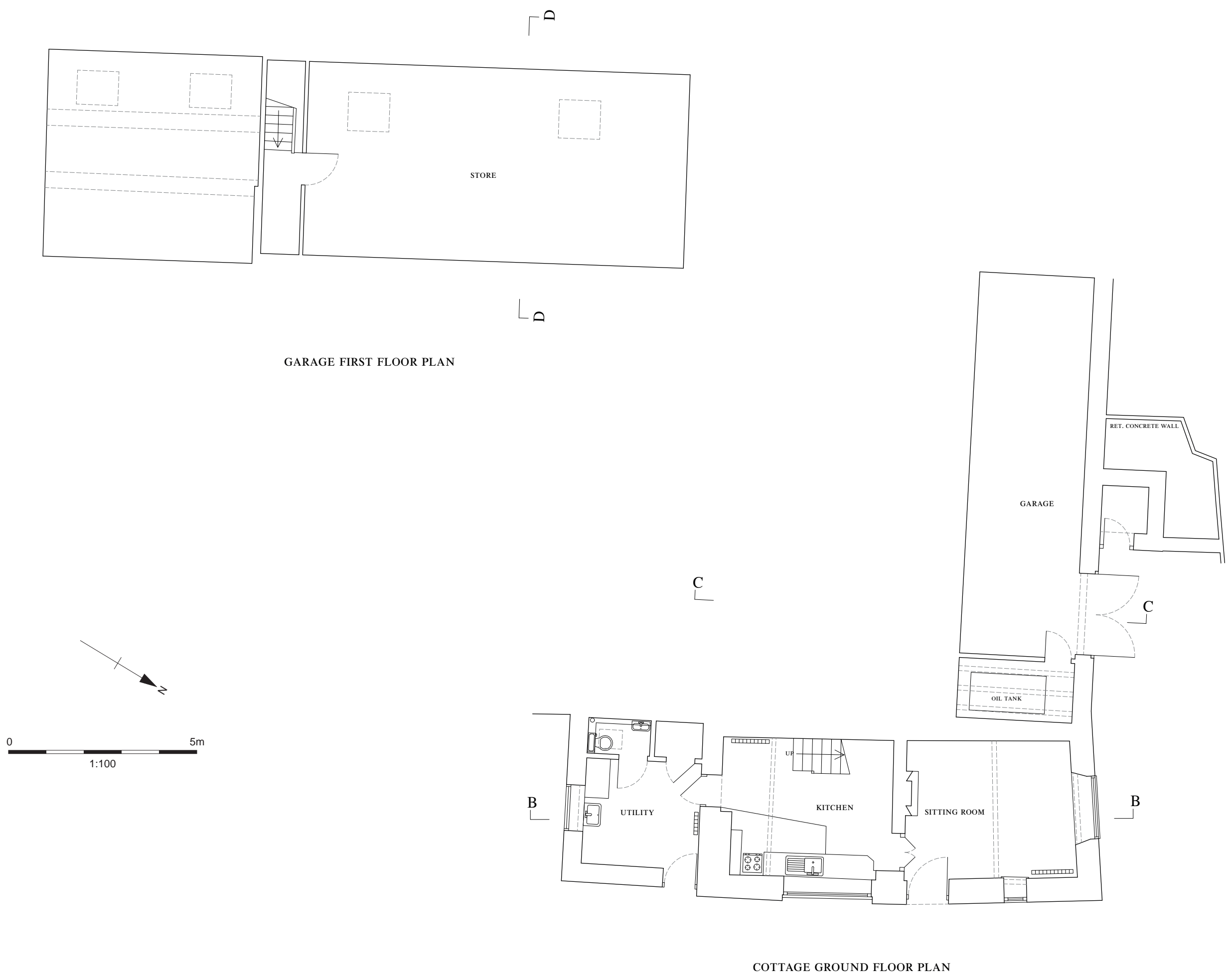


Figure 8: Ground floor plan of the cottage and the garages

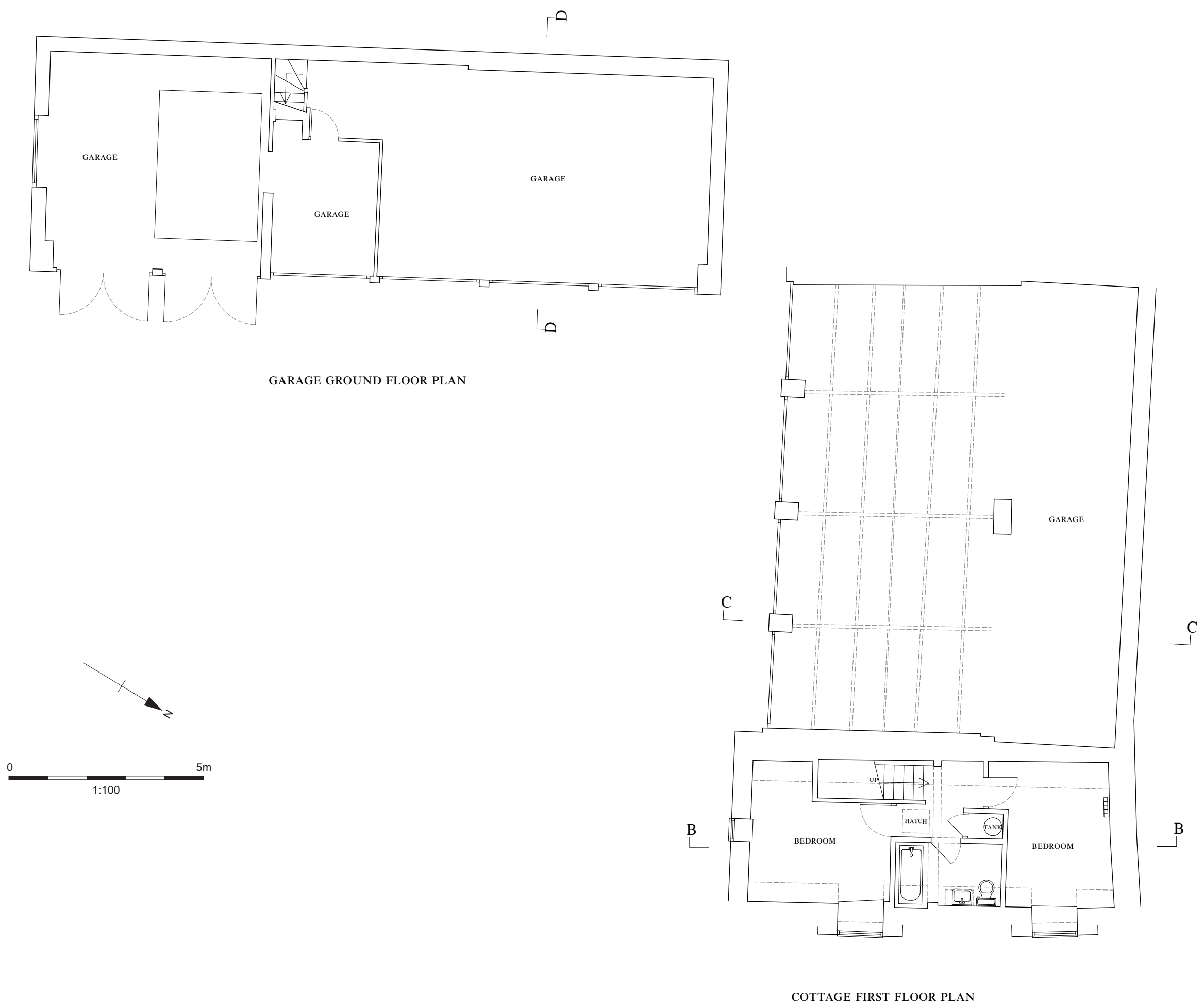
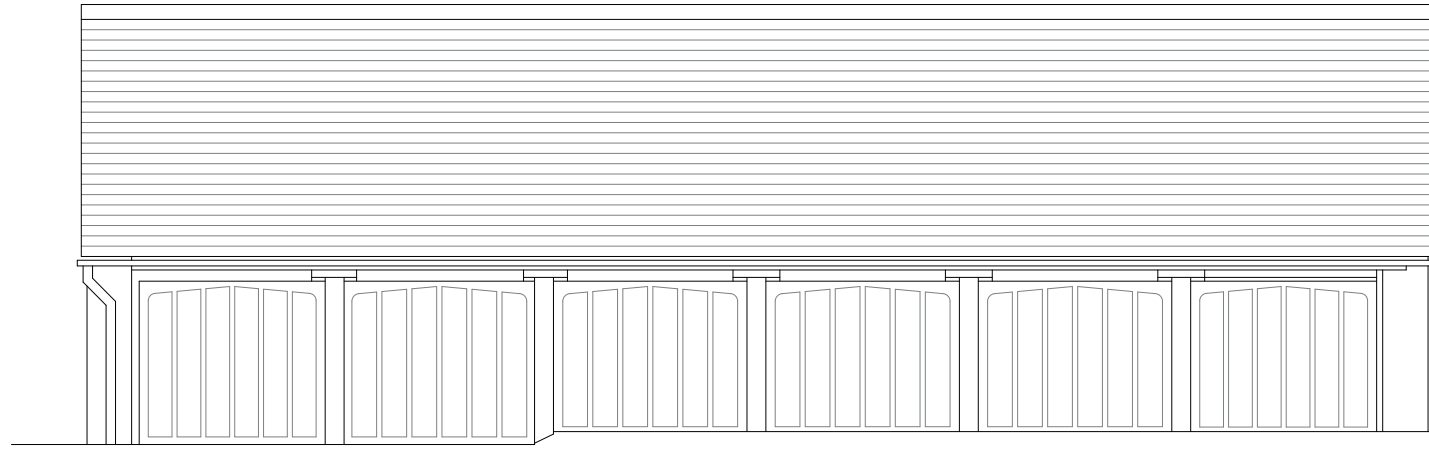


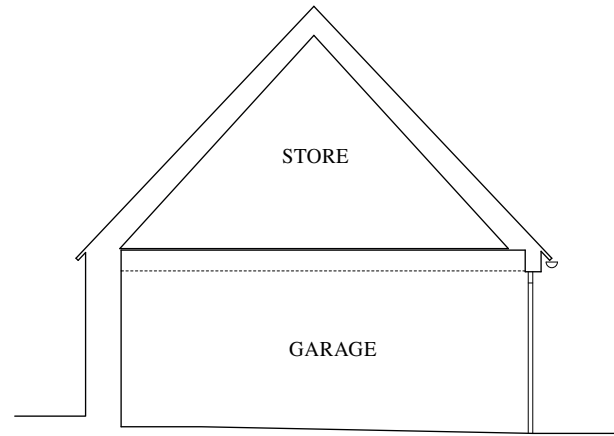
Figure 9: First floor plan of the cottage and the garages



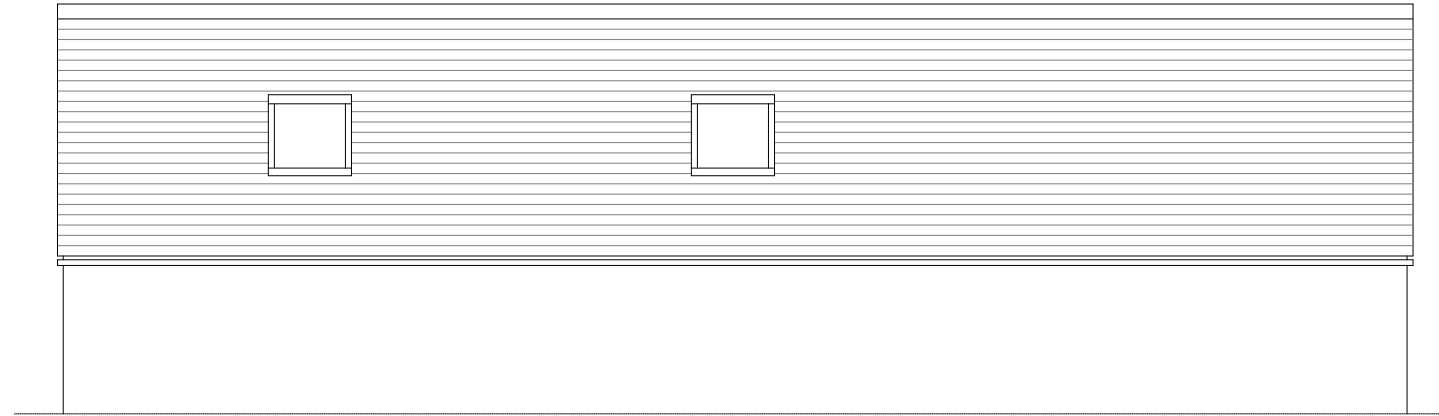
GARAGE SOUTH ELEVATION



GARAGE EAST ELEVATION



SECTION D-D



GARAGE WEST ELEVATION





Plate 1: The east elevation of Aldsworth Manor, looking south-west



Plate 2: The east and south elevations of Aldsworth Manor, looking north-west



Plate 3: The south-east corner of Aldsworth Manor, looking north-west



Plate 4: The west elevation of Aldsworth Manor, looking north-east



Plate 5: The cellar steps, looking north



Plate 6: The north chamber of the cellar, looking south



Plate 7: The north chamber of the cellar, looking west

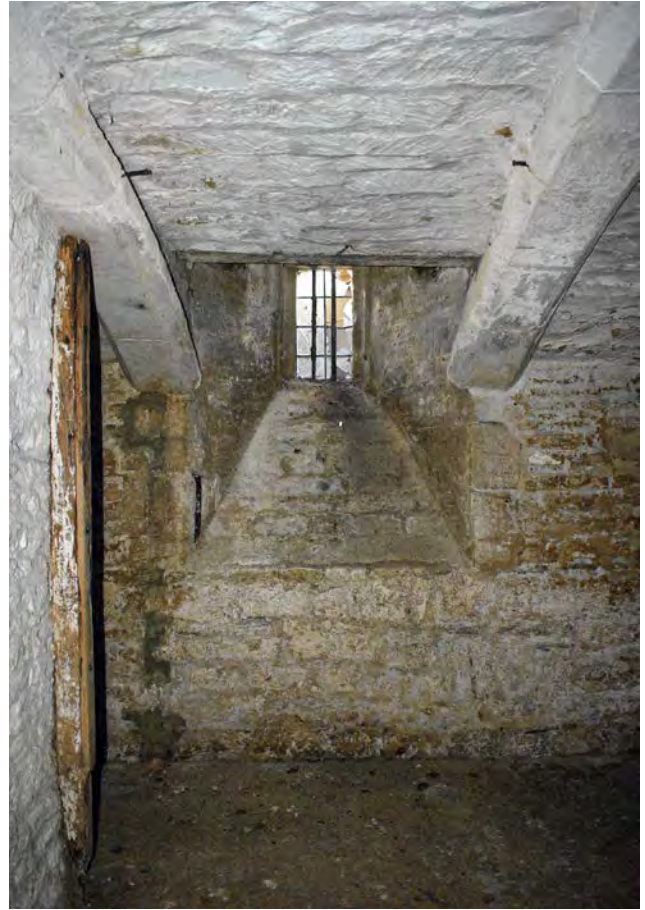


Plate 8: The south chamber of the cellar, looking east



Plate 9: The ground floor of the porch tower, looking west



Plate 10: The reception hall on the ground floor, looking north



Plate 11: The reception hall on the ground floor, looking south



Plate 12: The passage from the reception hall to the dining room, looking north



Plate 13: Window in the drawing room, looking east



Plate 14: Window in the drawing room, looking east



Plate 15: The drawing room, looking north-east



Plate 16: The sitting room, looking east



Plate 17: The passage to the kitchen, looking north



Plate 18: The dining room, looking east



Plate 19: The water pump in the north-east corner of the dining room, looking north-east



Plate 20: The kitchen, looking north



Plate 21: The back hall, looking west



Plate 22: The back hall, looking south



Plate 23: The staircase, looking north-east



Plate 24: The ceiling of the stair turret, looking west



Plate 25: The first floor hallway, looking south



Plate 26: The first floor hallway, looking south-west



Plate 27: Bedroom 1, looking north



Plate 28: Bedroom 1, looking east



Plate 29: The first floor bathroom, looking east



Plate 30: The first floor bathroom, looking south



Plate 31: Bedroom 2, looking south



Plate 32: En suite bathroom of bedroom 2, looking east



Plate 33: Lobby in the first floor of the north bay, looking west



Plate 34: Bedroom 3, looking east



Plate 35: Bedroom 4, looking north



Plate 36: Small bathroom in the first floor of the north bay, looking north



Plate 37: Bedroom 5, looking south



Plate 38: The attic corridor, looking south



Plate 39: Empty mortise in the truss in the attic corridor, looking south-west



Plate 40: Bedroom 6, looking north



Plate 41: Bedroom 6, looking south



Plate 42: Bedroom 7, looking south



Plate 43: The attic bathroom, looking north



Plate 44: Bedroom 8, looking south



Plate 45: The north-east corner of bedroom 8, looking north-east



Plate 46: The cottage, looking north-west



Plate 47: Small outhouse on the north side of the cottage, looking west



Plate 48: The sitting room of the cottage, looking south



Plate 49: The kitchen of the cottage, looking north



Plate 50: The utility room of the cottage, looking west



Plate 51: The attic landing of the cottage, looking north-east



Plate 52: The garages, looking north



Plate 53: The interior of the west garage, looking south

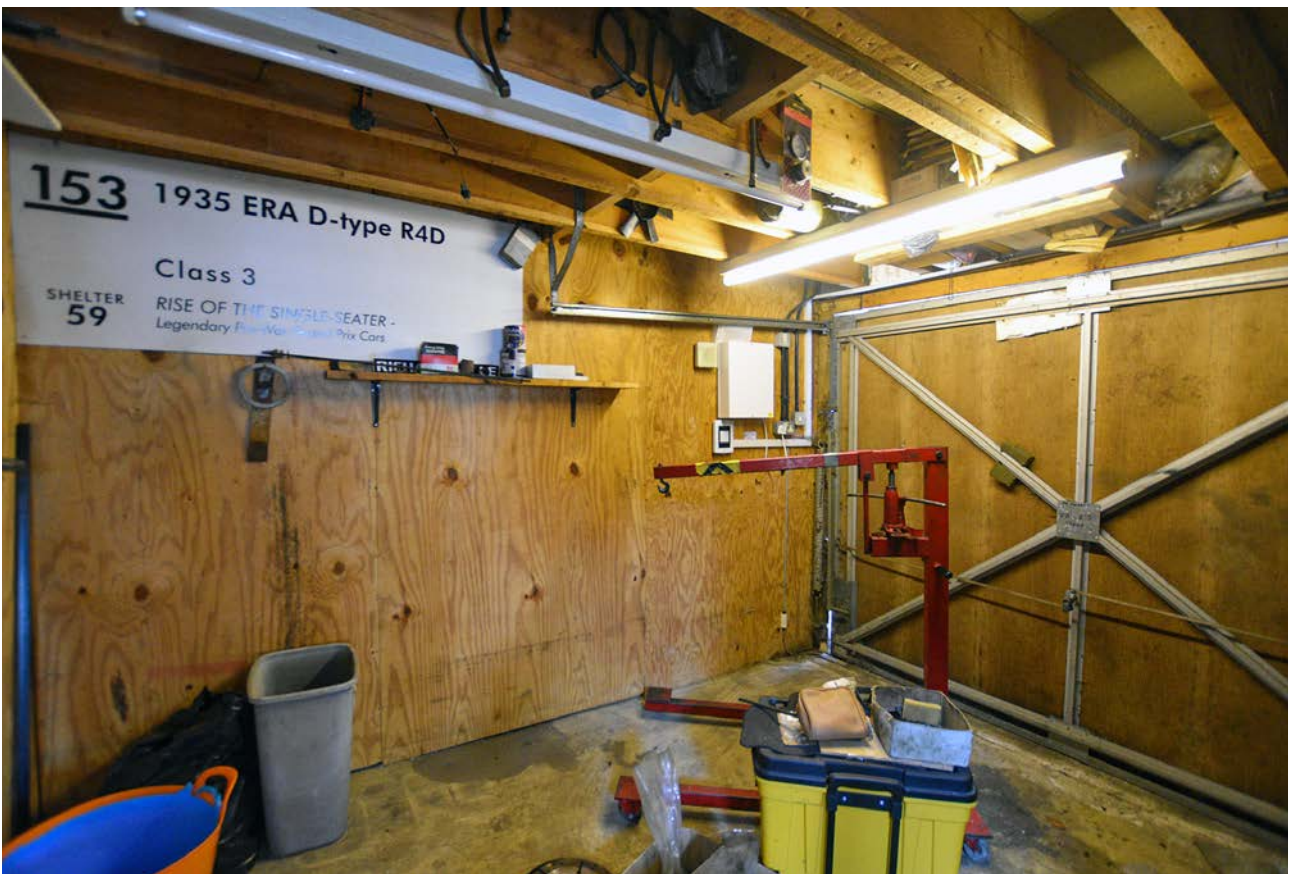


Plate 54: The interior of the west garage, looking north-east



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MCifA
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